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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Lady Macbeth wringing her hands: A statue which remained uninjured in the ruins of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in Stratford-on-Avon when the building was destroyed by fire.

Man and His Environment

THE HUMAN HABITAT. By ELLSWORTH HUNTINGTON. New York: D. Van Nostrand Co. 1927.

Reviewed by E. W. EAST
Harvard University

IT is a safe bet that no American male minted in 1880 or thereabouts looks back with pleasure at his efforts to acquire a knowledge of his earthly home. I am not so certain of the other sex. They were a rather docile lot in those days. How deadly dull the lessons were, as set by our ill-trained, untraveled teachers! Maps, maps,and again maps! Unremitting labor at outlines of the native state! Mine was Illinois. It always looked like a bag of marbles, with a jackknife on one side, and on the other a baseball bulging out the Mississippi just underneath the St. Louis bend. I envied the boy from Colorado.

The blame for this state of affairs should not be laid at the door of the country pedagogue, however; rather was it the fault of the mid-Victorian geographer whose labors invariably resulted merely in a poor description of a bad atlas. As a school-book, the geography had only one merit; it hid Nick Carter in admirable fashion.

If the present crop of boys does not learn something of geography, it is because they, and not the texts, are dull. The twentieth century geographer has found out how to make the subject entertaining. Even the most thoroughly disillusioned man of middle age ought to get a wholesome enjoyment out of the geographical writings of such a versatile and artistic scientist as Ellsworth Huntington. The thought came to me, as I realized that I had lost all sense of time while I was immersed in "The Human Habitat," that perhaps here was the substitute for the war interest which William James sought so long in vain. Why is not the age-long fight of man to control his environment as thrilling a story as that of his struggle against his fellow men? Why should the wars of selfish tyrants or of ambitious nobles or of bigoted religious fanatics engross the attention of our historians when they could just as well chronicle the stories of the tamer of the wild horse, of the genius who thought of planting wheat, of the explorers of the wild? Is not the history of

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How to Make a President

By HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

A PRESIDENT was born in the house on Sycamore Street that in 1903 belonged to the Old Gentleman. The Old Gentleman was an immigrant of German or German-Jewish blood, honest, of a fanatical energy, a farmer, a trader, a speculator. His wife, Mathilda, was a peasant type, good but inarticulate, comprehending only affection and work. And there they were a little earlier in 1903, and at the beginning of this book,* the Old Gentleman's family of sons and daughters, grandsons and granddaughters, twenty-two of them gorged with Thanksgiving dinner, while the Old Gentleman snickered and roared in turns, telling those grown-up uncles and aunts that they were to have a little brother, who was (so the book says) to become a President.

There they were, an America strange to earlier novelists, half foreign in the oldest generation, yet wholly assimilated to the Mississippi Valley, a family proud of itself, a Main Street family that would have laughed at the sarcasms of "Main Street"—too busy, too ambitious, too tenacious of respect to bother about self-criticism, a family about to be wrecked financially by the Old Gentleman's indiscretions, but impossible to eliminate from the American scene because it touched Illinois in every important aspect, and Illinois was America—the new America, not Hawthorne's, or Howells's, or Twain's, or Mrs. Wharton's, or even Sinclair Lewis's America.

It is a faunal group that Miss Hurst has brought together, like those excellent assemblages of birds and animals against natural backgrounds which museums now exhibit. In the figures and in the scene are all the elements supposed to be necessary for making an American President—the Schuyler family is intended as essential America.

* * *

Energy, either dominant or recessive, seems to be the chief quality specified. The Old Gentleman boils over with it; in Mathilda it has stiffened into habit. She slaves for her broad-bosomed daughters, slaves and weeps and prays for Davey—who is to be President. "Bek," the big-hearted, big-framed heroine of the story is that terrible energy incarnate which wears through mountains and drags hope from the bottom of the sea. Henry (always "Hennery" to Mathilda), the philosopher son, the pacifist, the lawyer who helps all the State except himself, an idealist too clear-sighted to be an optimist, is latent energy—his power is in ideas ready to explode when they pass into action. Phil is aimless, speculative energy, always racing toward wealth, never arriving. It takes energy clearly to make an American President.

But Miss Hurst has too much vision to let one quality exhaust her symbolism. This family group is rich. Steve, Bek's son, has the cold, craving stomach of the overstrained. He is a drunkard from youth, yet when the war knocks drink out of him and imagination also, he settles down into a panicky Babbitt, standardized into respectability. "Hennery," who would rather keep his thoughts than take the District Attorneyship they offer him, may be regarded as recessive idealism in its analytical stage. He is Emerson without his vitality, Lincoln without his ambition, the last glow of the New England mentality in America. Bek is the passionate love of soil of the pioneer and that fierce determination to get on that once conquered a continent, and can still give David a pattern of greatness. She is America in its making, and Winslow, her sensitive artist husband, cherished, protected, ineffective, an ideal for her of something in life that is finer than dairy farming, richer than struggle, is symbolic of esthetics in America—a virgin, glass-enclosed, in a wayside shrine above the mud of traffic. Indeed the Schuyler family has its dreams: if Bek works terribly for her living, and if the fairy fantasy of life that plays with the winds and crowns with the flowers, is shrunk to the limits of her half-wit boy who will never grow up, still she keeps his corner of the world inviolate for him. And here also in the family or in Henry's Henriette, whom he would neither marry nor give up, is the sentimental, platitudinous America of the woman's magazines, the oversexed girl of the new luxury, the arid, intense intellectualism which New England sent westward, and other American traits "too numerous to mention" in a review which must be getting beyond description.

I am being purposely unfair to the flow and synthesis of a powerful story because it is only by dissection that one sees what Miss Hurst is trying to accomplish. Here and looked at this way, is all America of the America that counts in her estimation, the types that we are, the blend of heredity and environment that can make an ideal American President. And what is absent or outlying in her picture is almost as significant as what is present and influential. The "old Americans" of the story are rich. They are the mortgage holders, the entrenched capitalists, "society," and their children are already going soft or wild, so that Henry has to get them out of trouble. Scholars, amateurs of art, preachers, educators, mean little or nothing in this Illinois America; but scientists and the ideas of scientists, agriculture, machinery, speed, the economics and the ethics of politics, these are alive. Bek teaches applied science to Davey. Henry gives

*A President Is Born. By Fannie Hurst. New York: Harper & Bros. 1928. $2.50.

This Week

"America."
Reviewed by *Allan Nevins.*
"Behold, the Bridegroom—."
Reviewed by *Oliver M. Sayler.*
"Captain John Smith."
Reviewed by *Walter S. Hayward.*
"Immigration Crossroads."
Reviewed by *John Palmer Gavit.*
Seventeenth Century Lyrics.
By *Christopher Morley.*
"Claire Ambler."
Reviewed by *Grace Frank.*

Next Week, or Later

"Gritney People."
Reviewed by *Julia Peterkin*

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him the philosophy of science and an insight into the power of thinking.

Here it all is then, the new American life of the twentieth century, assembled somewhat artificially in a family which is more French or Jewish in its bonds of relationship and its conclaves preceded by enormous eating, but still is meant for mid-Western America, the heart of a continent, the center of a civilization, the nebula from which a star must be made.

David is the star. David listens to his grown-up brothers, his grown-up nephews and nieces. David absorbs the intellectual curiosity of Henry and his passive idealism, keeps the curiosity, rejects the passivism. David inherits the fierce honesty of the Old Gentleman, sheds his prejudices and his temperament. David retains the patient unselfishness of his mother, but adds the indomitable will of Bek (the best character of the book), her insatiable determination to make things happen. David learns conciliation and compromise from family jars, industry in the family misfortunes, ambition from the family's decline. David grows up, gangling, ill-clad, ill-schooled (though well-educated by Henry), and conquers his inferiority complex by winning the love of Dora Tarkington—an old-fashioned "old American," humorous, simple, lovely, faithful,—apparently a happy married life is one specification for a President.

And David becomes, as the book tells us, though the story stops at his sixteenth year, a second Roosevelt, a conciliator with courage to fight what he cannot conciliate; a progressive determined to remake America, and later the world, by commonsense ideas borrowed from science, of which the only tangible ones are that airplanes will hold civilization together and that we must learn to rise above the mechanical age and control it. Clearly a good President, built from the model of the head of a vast industrial organization like the General Electric Company, with a stiffening of idealism added. An executive, in short, as we use the word, almost reverently, today, who will apply the ideas of the Henrys (the experts, thinkers, idealists) in so far as they will work, a pragmatist, an assembler, a middleman between ideas and the public that he will always democratically love and distrust.

And this (says Miss Hurst) is the American great man and what he comes from. Not a Lincoln, not a Wilson, not a Mussolini, since he believes in democracy, not a Jefferson, since he has more faith in machinery than in ideas. Best conceive of him as a Roosevelt become that long sought ideal, a business President, to whom business means the economic organization of life—a man determined to make government as successful as the steel business, to make it *work*.

* * *

This conception of American greatness is perhaps a little archaic. I should certainly vote for David if he were a candidate in 1928, but whether he is the destined president of twenty years later is another question. There are factors in this modern world not fairly represented in the Schuyler family. It is by no means certain that an idealist executive is going to satisfy the engendering passions, the spiritual cravings, the emotional complexes of the next stage of the industrial era. Great Causes have a way of putting commonsense remedies out of usefulness. The Schuyler family might have prevented the Russian Revolution, but not even David could have led it, dominated it, established it. Indeed the fallacy of the reasoning of the novelist and her Schuylerdom seems to be that the idea makers, the champions of causes, the real experts (like Henry) are to be kept working in the laboratory, while skilful executives "sell" their goods, "put over" their results. This works in modern business, but it has never worked long in the history of peoples. Mahomets, Napoleons, Jeffersons, Lenins, are experts in control, not in reserve. The political chemist who makes dynamite wants to use it also. Miss Hurst, I suspect, has got her dates wrong. David should have been born in 1883. As a successor to the standpattism of Mr. Coolidge or the incompetency of Mr. Harding, as a relief from the overstrain of Wilsonian idealism, he had his chance. But in 1943 we may not think so highly of business methods.

This is political criticism (for what it is worth) not literary criticism. It says no more than that. Miss Hurst, looking to the future, is really thinking (like all historical novelists and most historians) of the present; that she supported Roosevelt, believes that an open and honest mind and a strong and unselfish will are substitutes for greatness, and better than a Cause, that, in a word, she is writing of her own people and her own times.

And so I drop the future and raise the question, *is* David real, is he an ideal American, is the Schuyler family typical America? Is Miss Hurst interpreting the depths of the imagination of America, of Illinois, even of Miss Hurst? And I cannot tell, for this book is put together with such apparent design, the facts that made David are so efficiently chosen, the machinery of the story is assembled so much like a new Ford, with never a doubtful nut, or bolt, or screw, that I have the skeptic feeling always inspired by a transcript of life or history that is too logical or too neat. I believe in Bek and I believe in "Hennery," but I am not sure that I believe in the Schuyler family as a mirror of America, nor in David as President.

* * *

Indeed I am skeptical of this kind of novel as a revelation of the American mind, although I do not doubt the accuracy of the observer or the skill in marshalling facts. There is too much good journalism in it. Journalism is news made effective, and in the estimation of a journalist the effect is more than the news—a successful "story" of an alley cat is better than a flat narrative of a world disaster. So is a good lyric better than a bad epic, but not merely because it is easier to read. Indeed the difference between literature and journalism when it exists, which is often, is that the duty of the journalist first of all is to impress the largest number in the surest way. Hence the headline, the repetition of essential fact, the careful selection of useful incident. These are the laws of the American short story also, adopted and adapted when it was journalized under the influence of Bret Harte and Kipling and, later, O. Henry. And it is in the short story that Miss Hurst learned her trade; not the short story of exotic romance or easy sentimentalism, but a realist's short story, emphatic, colloquial, drawing its substance from the cosmopolitan streets of an American emigrant city; yet a short story that was essentially journalism, intended to catch the attention of a million readers and make it quiver to the tale of crude lives or unfortunate environment. One learns skill in such an endeavor, and efficiency, and the use of every rhetorical tool that insures effectiveness, but such writers become artificers almost inevitably. Like the feature writers of the press they know how to make any story "go over big."

And this is the weakness not only of "A President Is Born" but of many honest and effective books now being written by Americans, and especially American women. The writers are so enamored of the rhetorical machine which has been built for them that they do not realize the danger of putting so delicate a fabric as life through automatic rolls and levers. I do not mean to be unfair in this attempt to establish a critical distinction. Bek, in this book, is not machine made, nor Henry, nor the Old Gentleman, nor Mathilda, and David is human too. But the scheme that holds them all and uses them to represent a new America and make an ideal American is too artificial to be convincing and too emphatic to be subordinated as it should be to an imaginative searching of their minds. A fine group of characters is headlined, captioned, pulled up and onward toward its "feature," the President, until the emphasis grows tiresome and artifice destroys art.

* * *

The best proof of this straining toward an effect is the style of Miss Hurst's book, which is typical of the way in which skilful journalists try to "put over" a story. It is so mannered, so obviously a machine-gunning for effects, that is it hard to decide whether Miss Hurst writes in such a fashion because the book is artifice, or whether the book seems artificial because of its style.

With a gluttonous passion for detail she piles up and up her phrases until one can see the overladen notebook wheeling up its burden of broken sentences, neat epithets, pertinent words, dumping, and rolling out of the way of the next:

> Rebekkha was five-feet-ten, weighed one hundred and seventy, and had no fat. Level of eye, level of strong firm bosom. Level of brow, from which she wore the enormously thick brown hair coiled unstylishly on the top of the back of her head. Level of voice, too. One of those low, middle-register people. Without being masculine, there was something rather Socratic about the head of Rebekkha Renchler. A brow that jutted firmly over the deeply-molded roofs of eye sockets. A fine, strong, fierce nose. Mouth brackets. . . .
>
> There was barley soup tonight, full of the taste of bay leaves and cylinders of ox-tail that you fished out with your fork and then flecked with mustard. Sliced cucumbers called "hasty pickles," that Bek peeled first and sliced longwise and then set to boil in vinegar, cloves, and sugar. Pickled beets, grape jelly, pear-and-quince preserves, piccalilli and chow-chow, in the pressed-glass dishes. Hashed brown potatoes with a crust on. Oxtail stew with circles of green pepper swimming in a rich brown gravy that the very biscuits seemed to sop up hungrily as you dipped. Hominy and sorghum. Milk with a half inch of cream on top. And then Bek's fruit pie with the fork-prints on the cover and the lurid juices making it soggy. Cherry pie tonight, out of Bek's closet of hundreds of Mason jars of preserved fruits. How the ruby flavors spurted as the fork dug in. Usually, though, David took up his slice and bit, so that there were two gashes of smear beyond his mouth, into the middle of his cheeks. . . .
>
> Steve's clothing bore the horizontal creases of a man whose legs bend heavily. There were dimples out along the backs of his hands, set in little cushions of fat. The tailor, in taking his measurements, had to throw the tape-line around his waist.
>
> Right in the town of Centralia, hundreds of replicas of this derby-hatted Steve were meeting their life-insurance endowment-policies, being fairly true to their wives, reading their *Saturday Evening Posts*, *Literary Digests*, and comic-supplements, mowing their front lawns, paying their installments on loud-speakers, eating their Blue Plate luncheons, dodging jury-service, reconciling themselves to bob-haired wives, driving their family sedans, having their children's tonsils out, purchasing Frigidaire ice-boxes in fourteen monthly payments, attending the cinema-houses, tuning-in before turning-in, struggling to relieve financial strain, staving off blood-pressure, subscribing to fifty bricks, at a dollar a brick, in the new municipal hospital, scheming to turn in this year's four-cylinder model for next year's six, dreaming of college education for the children, struggling for Country Club membership, "now that the children are growing up," hoping for that raise, dreaming of the trip to the Canadian Rockies, spoiling their children, hating, indulging, loving, or spoiling their wives, achieving nervous indigestion, joining the boosters' club, stifling another old dream, climbing after new dreams, voting the full Republican ticket, flying an "excuse my dust" pennant from off the old sedan, teaching son to salute the flag, doctoring income-tax.

Indeed this honest, and often admirable, and sometimes affecting book, engenders an almost intolerable impatience with its mechanical operations long drawn out. Not merely does she pile up epithets, she repeats each characterization, each idea, each motivation like the themes in a jazz concerto. The reader first suspects, then knows, that a story is being concocted which by sheer virtuosity (and verbosity) is going to "get" him or destroy the English language and exhaust the art of rhetoric in the attempt. The English language does suffer, as witness the many sentences raucous or broken from overstrain—

> And yet, not entirely trusting intuition and the rather insufficient evidence, even when Milliken was in a position to buy and sell him, he was constantly in the Old Gentleman's debt.

The art of rhetoric suffers still more, for whatever the usefulness of such repetitiveness in the story of a fire on Broadway, or a murder in a movie palace, in a novel this slathering about of description and tom-tom pounding of points to be made is the nemesis of realism and the negation of art. On a sensitive imagination, the colossal lists of foods and household decorations, the constant reminders of the Old Gentleman's explosive squawks, of Mathilda's corded hands, of Bek's fierce possessiveness, of Steve's paunch, of Emma's vacuousness, Henriette's whalebones, and Henry's silent laughter, destroys effect as certainly as a too loud speaker on a vociferous radio. For a short story, such a rhetoric is at least understandable, but the intellect is affronted by all this artifice in a civilized novel. As in the movies, where innumerable flash-backs in an elementary story and captions that repeat the theme to nausea stir a fierce desire in the spectator to shout, "Get on, get on, we know she is going to have a baby"—so here.

The modernists, who have never been accused of journalism, write like this sometimes. Joyce is repetitive, Gertrude Stein discovered repetition, Sherwood Anderson taps the same nail long after it has been driven in. Yes, it is quite possible that Miss Hurst's sources for her style are as much literary as journalistic, though I doubt it. And that may be significant. This loose-mouthed fashion of shooting words by barrages may be due to the *Zeitgeist*.

If so, the worse for the *Zeitgeist*, which is usually as likely to be wrong as right. Indeed, is not the curse of modern realistic fiction just this, that it is weary of simple effects, determined to compensate for a shortage in imagination by a 100 per cent efficiency in transmission? And so, like

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the automobile manufacturers, it advertises 25 per cent more power, a subject with all the accessories, and so many gears and levers that the meanest intelligence can ride in it.

Or, to reduce all this to literary terms, here is a new romanticism which has run off with the realist's baggage. If you want classicism, look at Miss Cather's "Death Comes for the Archbishop." Miss Hurst's Bek and Henry are as humanly conceived as the two saints and heroes of that apparently simple chronicle. But Miss Cather's book is thrice-born, Miss Hurst's only twice. By which I mean that the huddled mass of detail which is life in the rough has yielded to the more imaginative writer characters and an idea (that is once), and these she has seen living in a story (that is twice), and that story has shed its excrescences, arranged itself by the logic of thought and the inner necessity of personal development, been stripped of its inessentials by the restraint of a disciplined imagination, and raised above artifice into art. Whereas Miss Hurst, with her acute observation, and her sympathy with a new and valid American civilization, has stopped short of the final effort which lifts the work clear and clean out of its encumbering realisms and cruder purposes, being content instead to use every mechanical device to make vivid, inescapable, and often tiresome the mass of circumstance which her method of an inquiring reporter has assembled for her book. And so does Sinclair Lewis, and so did John dos Passos in "Manhattan Transfer," and so does Theodore Dreiser, and so does Sherwood Anderson often to the destruction of his fine mystic insights. It is the kind of romantic expansiveness, vigorous, slovenly, tricky in its effects, and verbose against which we must oppose the classic ideal of refinement and perfection if we are to get much further with the new fiction of the industrial age.

Indeed this method, which advertising writers have consummated with their type displays, slogans, homely detail, and focus upon buyers' resistance, is fatal to fiction. It can prevent such good material as Miss Hurst's from catching fire. It can pervert its meaning by a false emphasis. It can corrupt the idea of style, which is not a trick, or a savory, or a punching machine, but the close-fitting garment of imagination.

The naturalist-romanticists have gone too far with their high-pressure salesmanship methods. They can sell us one family dinner but not half a dozen, one fine character once but not again and again with the same specifications on every other page, one apt adjective or adverb, but not twelve in a row. We want hand work, not machine multiplication. If a journalist cannot give us that, a novelist should. We want stories that are finished, not materials for a story grouped by pots and pans, chairs and sofas, books and bric-a-brac, like a country auction. Even the automobile manufacturers whose standardized products bear so close a resemblance to the short stories, the "features," and the concocted novels of the journalists, have become classicists by comparison. They have to meet large demand by factory production, and yet contrast the cars they turn out, each part indispensable and all harmonious, with the clumsy incoherence of cogs, levers, and wagon bodies which we had ten years ago—or with the sprawling naturalistic novel.

* * *

Perhaps David did become President. That is not the real point of this book, although it is its selling point. The heart of this book is the Schuyler family as an imaginative interpretation (not merely a representation) of Illinois, America. And if Miss Hurst has failed to realize her own high ideal it is because, by punch, push, repetition, even footnotes that tell you what to believe, she has turned a good novel into the feature story of the making of a President. That it still remains a considerable story not to be missed in the season's reading, is proof that the worst of methods cannot keep down such characters as David and Henry and Bek.

"Anatole France's brain," says *John O'London's Weekly*, "has been removed and weighed by experts. It weighs only thirty-six ounces as against forty-eight ounces, the weight of the average brain, but the experts say that what the brain lacked in weight it had in quality."

The centenary of Jules Verne will be observed at Nantes, his natal town, on February 8.

Unconventional History

AMERICA. By HENDRIK VAN LOON. Illustrated by the author in color and in black and white. New York: Boni & Liveright. 1927. $5.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

MR. VAN LOON'S numerous illustrations precisely harmonize with his four hundred and fifty pages of text. These illustrations are broad cartoons, often eccentric in design, always inaccurate in detail, and sometimes quite meaningless, but occasionally strangely effective in impressing a new fact or idea upon the reader. Nothing could be better, for example, than his picture of "our inheritance from the past"—a man dragging a cart filled with cannon, temples, gallows, books, castles, ships, and so on; or his depiction of the perils of the frontier—a skull with an arrow through the eyehole; or his portrait of America's most valuable ally in the Revolution, "General Wilderness"—a morass with a tangled thicket of woods above it. Other pictures are merely decorative. Some are perfectly vacuous. The general effect is of raggedness, eccentricity, and crudity, but of provocative unconventionality and boldness.

So it is with the text. Nobody will buy this book to obtain a complete and accurate factual account of American history, and it would be unfair to point out how Mr. Van Loon over-emphasizes certain subjects, how he leaves great gaps here and

HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON

there, and how he has misstated some facts and misdated some events. He aims at the broader effects. His book is intended to give a highly personal view of the general evolution of American civilization. In part, Mr. Van Loon emphasizes his independence by being slangy, over-popular, and aggressively irreverent. He writes of how Lord North was "bawled out," he quotes Rube Goldberg upon liberty, and he talks of Monroe knowing the advantage of a good poker-face. In part, he attempts, none too successfully, a Chestertonian inversion of old interpretations, as when he tells us that Andrew Jackson was a thorough conservative. But in large degree he achieves his goal by decidedly more creditable means. Thus in his narrative he emphasizes the importance of ideas, from Calvin to Rousseau and from Tom Paine to Wilson. Next to this, he emphasizes economic forces and motives. It is significant that the locomotive and the steamboat get a chapter that is about as long as the treatment of the entire Civil War.

Doubtless Mr. Van Loon would like to pose as an extremely hard-boiled realist in his attitude toward history; a writer absolutely merciless in his treatment of sham, myth, and false estimates. The fact, on the contrary, is that he is a complete romantic in his attitude toward the long and varicolored history of the American people. He views it as a great adventure, and under his pen some of its phases—the chapters on "New Zion at Twenty Below Zero" and on "Thomas Jefferson and the Emperor Napoleon" are good examples—become even more romantic than in the old style histories. He loves to turn out of his way for a fine, dashing episode like that of the Emperor Maximilian, who is treated under the characteristic heading "The Last of the Conquistadores," and even his paragraph berating the white Anglo-Saxon for his cruel and rapacious treatment of the Indians is set in a chapter again characteristically headed, "A Golden Spike Is Driven in Utah." We suspect that one reason why practically nothing is said in this book about American history between 1875 and 1900 is that it appeared a little drab to the author. Writing in this broad, headlong, colorful fashion—writing with marked sincerity and earnestness—he has produced a book which, while negligible for the purposes of all real students of the subject, should be of decided value and interest to great numbers of those who come under the heading of general readers; and especially to those who like plenty of ideas intermixed with their facts, and who welcome even bizarre ideas as adding a certain spice.

The Play of the Week

By OLIVER M. SAYLER

BEHOLD, THE BRIDEGROOM—. A Tragedy in Three Acts. By GEORGE KELLY. Produced by ROSALIE STEWART at the Cort Theatre, New York, December 26, 1927.

Reviewed from Performance and Manuscript

NO phase of artistic expression is abler than the theatre to embody the esthetic and ethical standards of its time and to do so in the prevailing psychological terminology. Dependent on instantaneous popular response, the pulse of the theatre must beat tempo with that of its public. Old themes may live again in the moulds of today. Themes of today may be poured successfully into the patterns of the past. Content and form may both be contemporary. In any case, there must be this link of today with today.

George Kelly has chosen the link of treatment rather than that of subject in his latest play, "Behold, the Bridegroom—." Boldly and skilfully, he has wrought that composite of then and now. The measure of his boldness lies in the hoary age of his theme, for, pared to the bone, it is the venerable old skeleton of the days of "East Lynne"—pining hearts and unrequited love. The measure of his skill lies in the plausibility and present significance with which he has been able to invest the process of dying for romantic love by enlisting the aid of the secret keys of modern psychiatry.

If our great-grandfathers had kept vital statistics with as much pretentious and painstaking care as we make a show of doing today, I have no doubt that feminine mortality for this cause would have presented a formidable figure. Obsessed with the theme as the dramatic and narrative literature of the period was, there must have been some foundation, some corresponding obsession, in life. Literature feeds on life more than life on literature. Besides, we know for a fact that the constrained, custom-curbed life of our great-grandmothers inevitably set the stage for just such emotional tragedies in the case of tense and super-sensitive young women. The régime itself made for an abnormal proportion of tense and super-sensitive young women. And when love and marriage were such a girl's only prospective professions, failure in them had consequences comparable in finality with the rigor of the constricting taboos.

Latterly, we have prided ourselves on recovery from this abnormal balance in life forces. And on the disappearance of repining as an impelling motive in our arts. Certainly it has thus disappeared from the novel and the drama. And certainly, with the coming of economic and professional freedom for women, it has dwindled from its dominant position in life. But Kelly rises from the bourgeois preoccupations of his previous plays to tell us that in more idle and still tradition-bound strata of our life today the phenomenon persists. And if we have devised cures for the ill, that is not to say that the ill no longer recurs. In other words, Kelly insists that there are still such young women as Tony Lyle among "our betters." And he hopes, with some ground for hope, that there are many more who will sympathize with her—among ourselves as well as "our betters."

Sensing thus a spark of life in a generally discarded theme, Kelly has not been satisfied to bring it before us in the florid emotional accoutrements of its elder literary and dramatic incarnation. Recognition of the fact in those days was sufficient. Sentimental exaggeration of the fact was in vogue. Our great-grandfathers were not realistically or causally inquisitive. Meanwhile, however, we have developed not only a greater curiosity, a consuming curiosity, with reference to the motivation of human actions, but also an elaborate and scientifically accurate body of knowledge and experience, gained by trial and error, wherewith to satisfy that curiosity. It is in terms of this newer psychology, therefore, that Kelly has expressed his tragedy of unrequited love. That we frequently neglect to

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apply what we know to the prevention and cure of such tragedies is the specific point of this bitter, relentless, disillusioning, and yet always tenderly wrought, play.

It is in the writing of the scene in which this point is explicitly made that Kelly betrays the cross-purposes that have always trailed his efforts as a playwright. There are artists whose left hands constantly fight their right. George Kelly is one of them. Although he belongs unquestionably to the small group of four or five native playwrights who show promise of challenging O'Neill's priority, he has yet to write a play in which these contradictory forces are not at war. As accurately as I can analyze the evidence, it is a case of Kelly underrating the intelligence and perspicacity of his audience. He seems to be in dread that his motive will not be plain. Having made his point, therefore, in the subtle, unobtrusive, self-effacing manner of the true artist, he mounts the platform, waves his hands, and otherwise deports himself unbecomingly to the artist he essentially is.

In "The Show-Off," Kelly's first play to disclose definite promise and assurance of his unusual gifts, this distrust of his audience took the form of exaggeration. The comedy of Aubrey Piper and his family, for all its pungent and racy truth, was written throughout in italics, underscored and in red ink. Possibly its success in large degree was due to that fact. But Kelly was not deliberately writing down to the risibilities of his audience. Rather, he was shouting at the top of his voice and in dead earnest, for fear he would not be heard. To prove his point in "Craig's Wife," he went to the extent of actual distortion of his leading character, thus failing, in the eyes of the discriminating, to prove it at all.

In "Behold, the Bridegroom—," the author succeeds for two acts in keeping this besetting temptation in control, only to yield summarily, and as disappointingly as ever before, in the first twenty minutes of the last act. Only a dramatist who took himself too seriously or his audience too lightly would have deceived himself into thinking that he was writing drama when he composed the psychological chart of this colloquy between Tony's doctors. George Kelly knows life. He knows the theatre. He has yet to know himself.

(*Mr. Sayler will review next week the four intimate productions in Max Reinhardt's German Repertory Season, including "Periphery," by Langer; "Servant of Two Masters," by Goldoni; "Love and Intrigue," by Schiller; and "The Living Corpse" ["Redemption"], by Tolstoy.*)

PLAYS OF THE SEASON
Still Running in New York

BURLESQUE. By *Arthur Hopkins* and *George Manker Watters*. Plymouth Theatre. The personal equation beneath pink tights and putty nose.

THE GOOD HOPE. By *Herman Heijermans*. Civic Repertory Theatre. A European repertory veteran ably revived on our only repertory stage.

PORGY. By *Dorothy* and *DuBose Heywood*. Republic Theatre. The rhythms of Negro life interpreted in pulsing drama.

ESCAPE. By *John Galsworthy*. Booth Theatre. Leslie Howard *et al.* in the dramatist's latest—and last—play.

THE IVORY DOOR. By *A. A. Milne*. Charles Hopkins Theatre. An ironic and whimsical fairy tale for grown-ups.

AND SO TO BED. By *J. B. Fagan*. Bijou Theatre. A satiric and pungent comedy based on a presumable day in the amorous life of Samuel Pepys, Esq.

THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA. By *Bernard Shaw*. Guild Theatre. A debated and debating play set squarely on its feet at last by sound acting and discerning direction.

THE PLOUGH AND THE STARS. By *Sean O'Casey*. Hudson Theatre. The Irish Players lift the curtain on a Dublin tenement under the rebellion.

PARIS BOUND. By *Philip Barry*. Music Box. A young American playwright comes into his own with a triumph of the casual.

THE ROYAL FAMILY. By *George S. Kaufman* and *Edna Ferber*. Selwyn Theatre. A wise, witty, and tender comedy of the actor at home—back of "back stage."

Town-Pump Policy

IMMIGRATION CROSSROADS. By CONSTANTINE PANUNZIO. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by JOHN PALMER GAVIT

TO anyone with considerable experience in contact with foreign-born groups and individuals in America, especially if he has given appreciable study to the general aspects of the question, our immigration policy is charged with tragedy. So charged whether viewed with regard to its reactions upon our international relations and the esteem of the world; upon large portions of our population and the public unity and morale; or upon communities, families, and individuals in detail.

When all is said, assuming the more or less free admission of foreigners for limited periods of travel and observation, we want to know and ought to know concerning those coming from other lands and cultures what will be their contribution to or subtraction from our general well-being (including their own); how they will fit or can be made to fit, into our social life. Of the essence of every sovereignty is the unquestioned and perhaps unquestionable right to decide who shall come and who shall stay out. It is all very well to hold every person free to go and come at his pleasure; but such freedom belongs at the top of the Bean-Stalk. Your right to lock your bedroom door extends logically to the national frontier.

The question of standards of admission is at the last a practical one, to be answered in the light of common sense and experience, illumined by such as we can muster of humanity and imagination; to the end of the largest benefit present and prospective to the country and the individual.

At this moment the immigration policy of the United States is conceived from the point of view of the town-pump; country-store cogitations warped by primitive provincial prejudices and superstitions with the justification of a widely advertised but almost wholly fallacious pseudo-ethnology, unsupported by any respectable study of the subject. Instead of inquiry as to the fitness of individuals for admission to our community, just now we are attributing *en masse* qualities to *races as such*. We have definitely abandoned our old-time posture as refuge for the oppressed and the persecuted, and along with that all pretense of admitting the individually desirable. Under the pretext of limiting immigration pending assimilation of our overcongested masses of the foreign-born, we have not only reduced our immigration to all but infinitesimal numbers, but created arbitrary racial discriminations having no sound or scientific basis in experience or sound research.

Already there are compunctions. They will increase. Presently we shall see that all this is fallacious, and we shall modify our policy. It is not germane here to discuss the question of the *numbers* wise to admit, needed in industry and in the general development of our still new and still underpopulated land. That is quite another matter. But the most superficial examination brings forth the fact which just now it is the vogue to overlook; namely, that in every phase of our life we are indebted to immigrants—yes, conspicuously of the particular racial groups upon which our policy casts aspersions—for contributions of indispensable kinds, without which America could not have become what she is—even on the most materialistic plane; not to mention spiritual gifts of every kind.

Himself an Italian, author of "The Soul of an Immigrant," one of the most poignant of our American autobiographies, Mr. Panunzio, now professor of Social Economics at Whittier College in California, with sweet-spirited yet searching analysis, deals with the problem from the point of view of one of our most valuable individual acquisitions from abroad. He shows how the late amendments to our immigration law have actually worked to defeat their own ostensible purpose; the harm they have done to both sides in the interchange. He is scholarly yet dramatic, human yet scientific, in handling a question which thus far has been merely bungled and bedevilled by ignorance.

Be the degree of restriction what it may, we must find some better basis for it than that which now prevails. We must take this intricate subject out of the hands of amateur social philosophers motivated by prejudices and armed with unwarranted assumptions of racial superiority (almost invariably that of their own origin!) and arrive at some method of screening which will save for us the desirable individuals of whatever origin. To this desirable end Professor Panunzio's admirable study is a most valuable contribution.

Mr. F. C. Wood, a former librarian, is quoted by the Grosvenor Library Bulletin of Buffalo as saying: "People steal books to gratify their selfishness—a certain ego, which tells them they are entitled to the books if they want them. Students often will take a book out of the library in order to use it for class reports and other lessons. Radicals on certain subjects will mutilate books which do not please them."

The Truth About Smith

CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH. By E. KEBLE CHATTERTON. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1927. $4.

Reviewed by WALTER S. HAYWARD
Harvard University

OUR first American historian has a new defender. E. Keble Chatterton, in this second volume to appear in the Golden Hind Series of the lives of great explorers, takes up the cudgels in behalf of Captain John Smith. The controversy as to Smith's credibility has raged long and often fiercely. Far back in the seventeenth century, Thomas Fuller, in his "Worthies of England," the earliest printed biography of Smith, remarked of the gentleman: "It soundeth much to the diminution of his deeds that he alone is the herald to publish and proclaim them." The first modern whisper of suspicion was raised in 1860 by Dr. Charles Deane, who pointed out that Smith's own statements in his writings were often at variance. Other historians were quick to follow with the notice of new discrepancies, tending to show that either Smith was a liar or else unduly oblivious to the importance of dates and recorded history.

The first part of this biography is little more than a paraphrase of Smith's own account of his early travels and adventures, which he wrote in 1629, when he was forty-nine years old, and when presumably his memory as to what had happened so many years before was somewhat hazy. If Smith does not, like Munchausen, strain probability beyond the limit of belief, yet his deeds and exploits border on the superhuman. Mr. Chatterton, however, accepts them at their face value. He admits Smith was inaccurate, but is profoundly convinced, nevertheless, of his veracity.

The case against Smith is based chiefly on what happened in Virginia, first because of the great variations in the accounts which Smith himself gave of his adventures, and second because of the new evidence brought to light in the writings of Smith's contemporaries.

Smith himself wrote three accounts of Virginia. The first appeared in a letter sent back from the colony in 1608 to a friend, and was reprinted in England, without his knowledge or permission, under the title "A True Relation of Virginia." He himself published in 1612 a "Map of Virginia, with a Description of the Country, Commodities, People, Government, and Religion." In 1624 appeared his "General History of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles," purporting to be a collection of tales written by the individuals concerned, and collected and edited by Smith. This latter work, therefore, was printed sixteen years after the account he wrote at the time of his experiences.

Mr. Chatterton in one way and another tries to reconcile some of the discrepancies between these accounts. Other discrepancies he altogether fails to mention. The chief bone of contention is, of course, the Pocahontas story, and this the author swallows whole, in spite of the weight of evidence against it.

It can hardly be doubted that Smith's statements are often fallacious, and it is unfortunate that Mr. Chatterton's admiration for his subject has somewhat blinded him to the facts. Smith was an arch-subjectivist of a time not noted particularly for self effacement. Yet, when all is said and done, Smith remains a dauntless explorer, an individual of the greatest common sense where he was not himself concerned, and a person to whom literature is indebted for some extremely enlivening narratives.

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Her World

CLAIRE AMBLER. By BOOTH TARKINGTON. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1928. $2.50.

Reviewed by GRACE FRANK

THE innocuous *far niente* of an Atlantic liner would seem to provide a perfect setting for the reading of this novel. An engagingly light tale, with an old-fashioned treatment—in a good sense—of a new-fashioned theme—also in a good sense, it never penetrates that theme so deeply as to be uncomfortable but just deeply enough to impress the reader pleasantly with its accuracy. One's chief quarrel with Mr. Tarkington is that he did not say more when he knew so much.

Claire Ambler's universe is one-dimensional, bounded on all sides by Claire Ambler. The feelings she arouses in others are of no concern to her except in so far as they satisfy her desire to please any man who happens to be adjacent at the moment. We first meet her at eighteen, nonchalant and provocative, ineffectively trying to pull her scant, short skirt over her thin knees and effectively making every boy within reach give her a good time. We last see her at twenty-five walking to the altar with beautifully calculated smiles and steps, and meditating upon the probable effects of the light from a stained-glass window which will presently fall upon her wedding gown. Between these two ages she has casually inflicted great suffering on two good men who have loved her and has herself experienced considerable grief at losing one of them, not, however, without half-consciously playing the rôle of tragedy-queen for the benefit of an attractive stranger conveniently at hand to observe her.

Mr. Tarkington's revelation of what goes on behind the inarticulateness of the adolescent male and the volubility of the adolescent female is wholly delightful. Young Nelson's difficulty in attaching Claire firmly and exclusively to himself, his unreasonable and foolhardy efforts to impress her, Claire's instinctively ingratiating responses to her young admirer the while her mind is more seriously preoccupied with the important business of deciding which gown to wear at a dance—all these earlier scenes in the book are in the author's best vein. One also remembers with pleasure Claire's scatter-brained conversation as she flicks the edges of half-a-dozen serious topics—reminding an eavesdropper of "a flea upon the open pages of an encyclopedia,"—her sudden infatuation and the tricks she plays for it as well as the tricks it plays upon her, her well-acted and really touching renunciation, and the encounter between her and the mature Sherman Peale, so neatly repeating in full chords the delicate arpeggios of an earlier scene.

But "Claire Ambler" is not a pendant to "Penrod" or "Seventeen" and never approaches "Alice Adams" in substantiality. The final impression of the book is of something slight and thin where fulness and rotundity were obviously demanded and deserved. There are indications that the author intended Claire to become less hollow than she turned out to be, but that her empty head and careless heart circumvented the intention. On those rare occasions when she soliloquizes about the futility of her existence, sees her "artistic" feigning for what it is, or forgets herself and thinks of someone else, she hardly seems quite herself. Nevertheless the book is eminently readable. It moves swiftly and easily on the lightest of rails, and carries one from Maine to Sicily and back to New York with the deftness of an experienced courier.

"The name of Carel Capek, the author of R.U.R., has long been familiar to readers and playgoers," says *John O'London's Weekly*, "but few of them could have been aware that there was another prominent Czech writer of the same name. This was K. M. Capek, the greatest Czech novelist of modern times, who has just died at Prague at the age of sixty-seven. He was born near the frontier between Bohemia and Bavaria, in a district where the Slav peasantry, a sturdy and obdurate race, are known as 'Chods,' and for this reason he adopted the signature Capek-Chod, which serves to distinguish him from his younger namesake. He did not achieve fame as a novelist until comparatively late in life. The first of his works which call for special notice is the novel 'Kaspar Len, the Avenger,' published in 1908, and regarded by many as his finest work."

Mr. Moon's Notebook

January 11th, 1928: *Campion on the old Tent-ground.*

A RARELY tuneful singer, Thomas Campion! Here is his illumined phrase to warm this shivering season!

Now winter nights enlarge
  The number of their hours,
And clouds their storms discharge
  Upon the airy towers.
Let now the chimneys blaze
  And cups o'erflow with wine;
Let well-tuned words amaze
  With harmony divine!
Now yellow waxen lights
  Shall wait on honey love,
While youthful revels, masques, and courtly sights
  Sleep's leaden spells remove.

But "indeed!" sniffed my modern self to me. "How it smells of the lamp! Who are you to affect the early seventeenth century? Are there courts now? Tennis courts and police courts! Are there masques? The Beaux Arts Ball! Is there candlelight? In Greenwich Village!"

"You talk in terms of Time," returned my elder self equably, "and Time is but an antique imposter. Who more exhilarate than I at certain late and early gatherings of the day; but what does that signify, or that on other evenings I would far rather eschew dancing to a yawping phonograph in favor of attention with the inner ear to older, subtler cadences. In Campion's England there were "Books of Ayres;" and the pleasing fellow set many of his delicious words to his own music.

"I am aware," continued this elder self, rising and standing to look out of the window upon the large apartment house opposite, "that yonder in the street the plaintive whistle of the uniformed doorman is even now beseeching the bandit taxicab. I am cognizant of the fact that in innumerable cumbrous steel and concrete hives my contemporaries, besotted by noise, are listening to the intermittent intelligibility of the radio; I can faintly hear the elevated trains rush roaring by at the corner; I know that tomorrow night at about this hour two unfortunate people who planned and executed the death of another even more unfortunate will themselves encounter death in the gruesome electric chair; then there will a hurrying clamor of leathern-lunged extra-edition men bawling through the streets. I am not unwitting that war, waste, frenetic jubilation, murder and rapine and sudden death persist around us to feed news to the rampant, roaring presses. If I were to essay the streets cross-gartered, in trunk-hose, slashed sleeves, baldric and a plumed hat I should be mistaken either for a sandwich-man or for Antichrist, most probably the former. But—again—what does *that* signify? Campion informs us

All our pride is but a jest;
None are worst and none are best;
Grief and joy, and hope and fear,
Play their pageants everywhere;
Vain opinion all doth sway,
And the world is but a play.

"'Everywhere.' Everywhere in space and time. Time is a whirling dervish rotating wildly ever in the same vortex. Campion of the early seventeenth century is less alien to me tonight than are airplanes, skyscrapers, automobile gangsters, girl swimmers, two million Buicks, bond market transactions, and Mutt and Jeff. There is no Time, truly. Men's virtues and men's sins remain the same. Primitive desires have merely assumed new paraphernalia, which, in its turn, will be cast aside. If, in the midst of this confusion, I revert to old songs of England for an evening how can it be said of me that I cease to be what I am inevitably and always was,—a contemporary American? Or how can it be said of these songs that they have ceased to be what they are and always were,—eternal beauty and wisdom? Why, everywhere, all over the earth, at the present moment, nameless thousands are in precisely the mood of

Thrice toss these oaken ashes in the air,
Thrice sit thou mute in this enchanted chair;
And thrice three times tie up this true-love's knot,
And murmur soft—'She will, or she will not.'

nor was the mood ever better expressed. Perhaps this age is less given to sentimental reverie; but I doubt it, when I observe smart and slick young persons reclining bemused by the spell of some modern popular song raucously wailing its pitifully illiterate words from a loud speaker. We have an ill ear for delicate and melodious language today; we must be shrieked and yelled at, and, evidently, we must continue to consume synthetic gin; but there are still the rarer pleasures. This evening's quiet reading to me is one. It remains so to many, say what you will. For instance, I know few more admirable utterances concerning the two sexes from the masculine point of view than Campion's

Lost is our freedom,
When we submit to women so:
  Why do we need them
When in their best they work our woe?
  There is no wisdom
Can alter ends, by Fate prefixed.
O, why is the good of man with evil mixed?
Never were days yet called two,
  But one night went betwixt.

"You're maudlin," announced my modern self. "Shucks! The kind of thing I like is

'S wonderful,
  'S marvelous
That you should care
  For me-e-e!

Snap out of it,—see the little cutie over in the corner,—Good Lord, you don't even know the Charleston!

"The Charleston is already ancient," returned my elder self heavily and acidly. "And your ribaldry is merely ridiculous. And, moreover, there *is* no 'little cutie' over in the corner. I answer you out of the poet's own mouth

Go burn these poisonous weeds in yon blue fire,
These screech-owl's feathers and this prickling briar;
This cypress gathered at a dead man's grave;
That all thy fears and cares an end may have.

May the vanities of this age perish to heighten the enjoyment of evening communion with an harmonious wisdom that is ageless! Ah God, I would I were far away in some old oak-panelled library where, in the words of still another,

Caxton sleeps, with Wynkyn at his side,
One clasp'd in wood, and one in strong cow-hide

or in some tavern of the olden time nigh Bartholomew Close, amid "porters, pipes, punch, purl, pigtails and politics!" And if I elect such company ever and anon, though the song, the feast, the surroundings and the voices beglamour me merely through the sorcery of words from old books, why should it so irk you? I abhor more than anything the idiot babble of this modern age that our present concerns are preponderatingly important, that we have time no longer for relishing the humors of other epochs or for the appreciation of choice literature. I can recognize when I see it a vigorous interpretation of our own period; I still consider it a rather extraordinary age in which to be alive,—but—"

At this point my modern self yawned rudely and loudly.

"Oh, go ahead, then," he vouchsafed, "hobnob with your old Cherry-ripe till the cows come home; cultivate your Caxton; not that I care! Only I think you're dead from the neck up. Here you are, living in the midst of the most exciting—"

"Varlet!" my elder self interrupted him. "You spin in a whirlpool and call it progress. In this day of incredible quickness of mechanical communication, do not most *minds* fail utterly to communicate with each other with a fraction of the grace, richness of allusion, wit and wisdom of the still potent ghosts who loom like a golden cloud behind and above our scurrying insect activity? Am I defending pedantry? No. I am quite aware, with the late 'Hudibras' Butler, that 'pedantry is but a corn or wart bred in the skin of judgment, sense, and art.' I know that in the past of which I speak 'multitudes of rev'rend men and critics' had 'got a kind of intellectual rickets.' But that is quite beside my point. Today there is a newer pedantry abroad. Quite as pernicious. This is to believe that any pleasure taken in the grace, charm, and richness of the words of philosophers and poets of other ages must necessarily be either an arid folly or a pure affectation. We are informed, in fact, by one contemporary school of thought that literature must be born spontaneously in and of the crowd, for mass

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gatherings,—that the day of pondered phrase and writing as an individual art shall be no more,—that the 'People' are more important than literature,—as if good writing had ever been anything but the distinguished expression of individuals, leading, teaching, refining the masses. But no! Our age will not stop even for a single evening to contemplate what is to me so important a thing as the melodiously artful presentation of ageless aptness by a poet of the past—"

"Getting alliterative, aren't you! He being one of your giants in the cloud, I suppose," mocked my modern self. "Why, old Campion was distinctly minor anyway. Why waste your time—"

"And why in the name of Demogorgon," my elder self shouted at him, by this time losing his temper completely, "take any interest in any particular flower in a garden or in any particular sunset at any hour or in any particular—"

"Woman," supplied my modern self. "Old Campion did that, I admit; seems to me, in a good many. That's all right; but he doesn't talk in terms—"

"In terms of what," my elder self vociferated, "in terms of Ford cars, of best-sellers, of strikes and lockouts, of jazz and modern Russia, of 'Big Bill' Thompson and ticker-tape, of comic-strips and bootlegging, of real-estate developments and the Marines in Nicaragua? Do you never get tired of the topical,—do you never weary of the bloated importance of the present,—do you never—"

"I think you're an introvert. Yep. That's what you are," pronounced my modern self, shrugging himself into his overcoat, "Me, I'm an extrovert. I'm off to The Wow Club. Boy, that band! So long!"

My elder self, once more alone, sighed deeply, relapsed into an easy chair, softly to himself began to read

Turn all thy thoughts to eyes,
Turn all thy hairs to ears,
Change all thy friends to spies,
And all thy joys to fears:
True love will yet be free,
In spite of jealousy.

"*And I certainly hope the place is pinched,*" he thought in venomous parenthesis.

(*To be continued in a fortnight*)

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

Unmarried Mothers

VENTURE'S END. By KARIN MICHAELIS. Translated by GRACE ISABEL COLBRON. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1927. $2.

IT IS BETTER TO TELL. By KATHLEEN COYLE. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by GLADYS GRAHAM

TWO books of a feather have flocked together to America this winter. One from Denmark, one from England, they reach us the same season with plots almost identical. There are plenty of plots only too familiar around which ten novels might be written without causing comment, but the plot of "Venture's End" and of "It Is Better to Tell" does not come under this head. Both stories have as heroines women who have preferred other benefits to those of clergy; women of courage, intelligence, and charm, who have been eminently successful in their maternity, and who are now, at middle-age, faced by a clear-eyed second generation questioning its origin. Where Floyd Dell's latest hero became a father accidentally and remained one unwillingly, the heroines of Karin Michaelis and Kathleen Coyle become unmarried mothers purposely and remain so by preference. These two women are as far from resembling the wild women of current fiction as they are from resembling the ruined ladies of an earlier day; sex dominates neither of them. The passion which destroys Meta Trapp knows nothing of men, and the final respectability thrust upon Lydia Scarfa offers no love.

Karin Michaelis should be remembered as the Danish author who wrote "The Dangerous Age." The form of her present novel, "Venture's End," is ingenious in its handling of the time element. The heroine is introduced quietly enough in an unusually happy home with three attractive daughters; gradually the reader becomes aware that one of the daughters was born out of wedlock, then that all three were, and finally that they are daughters of three different fathers. By the time this knowledge is gained one is already conscious that the mother, Meta Trapp, is not of the promiscuous type, that casual love affairs could never have attracted her. Very cleverly, at the full realization of the apparent discrepancy, the story swings back to Meta's childhood and the emotional environment out of which sprang the psychological necessity for her attitude towards life and love. The light charm of the opening chapters is surcharged with a sense of coming change, the author never lets a clue slip until she is quite ready, with the result that there is something of the tautness of a mystery story throughout the book. Incidents in the plot may be unconvincing in themselves, the story undoubtedly wavers toward the end, but Meta Trapp, demanding unswervingly of life every right she considers her due, even that last bitter right of punishment, and her three daughters, unconsciously but inevitably swerving from the mother axis, are people to be remembered. "Venture's End" is likely to send us back to read or reread "The Dangerous Age."

Kathleen Coyle in "It Is Better to Tell" has very probably more nearly achieved her purpose than has Karin Michaelis, but it is a much less subtle purpose, concerned for the most part with the surface of life and events rather than with subterranean psychic currents. Her heroine, Lydia Scarfa, living in Antwerp, is the mother of a grown son and daughter who are members of the youthful Belgian intelligentsia and have been active in arranging for lectures by visiting artists. The story opens with the coming of a dramatist whom they particularly admire. The fact that he travels with a colored mistress closes the usual Antwerpian doors upon him during his stay. Lydia, knowing that he is the father of her two children, permits them to invite him to her home. The ensuing complications and temperamental differences hurry the story along a colorful path to a rather drab though highly probable conclusion. Without betraying the pattern of her story Kathleen Coyle succeeds in creating a carnival-like atmosphere in which the characters move in a succession of brilliant high-lights whatever the seriousness of the occasion.

Man and His Environment

(*Continued from page* 545)

Homo sapiens embattled against the powers of the air, the earth, and the sea, that conflict which brought about the rise of man from barbarism to order, which gave him his culture, science, and art, and which in reaction brought about new races, a greater epic than the description of the slaughter-fest of Troy?

Huntington is not Homer, nevertheless he writes a fascinating book on how each group of mankind is chained like Prometheus to a definite set of rocks and how these fetters limit his activities. We come to realize why the inhabitants of the earth, from the icy wastes of the Arctic to the hot sands of the Desert, have taken on the habits and customs which they exhibit. Their conduct is directed along definite lines by the climate and soil characteristic of their specific habitat, by the minerals, the animals, and the plants which they have at hand, and by the intelligence they display in dealing with their problems. Moreover, the changes which man has made to ease his chains are hardly greater than the changes which the struggle reflects on man himself. "The process of selection," says the author, "is the key to a large part of the science of geography."

Of course we know without being told that the various subdivisions of our race adapted themselves to the conditions with which they came in contact. If they had not, we, their descendants, would not be here. What we need to hear is what the adaptations are and why they are necessary. Huntington takes us on a personally conducted tour and explains these points.

In the Kalihari Desert of Africa, we see how the Bushmen have responded to the full forces of the desert's might, how the Ba-Kalahari have adjusted their customs to the desert borderlands with a combination of primitive agriculture and husbandry, and how the Hottentots—with a little more intelligence, under slightly better conditions—have solved their problems in a somewhat different manner. In North America, we see what the indigenous inhabitants had to contend with in their struggle. We see why the leadership of the world lies with Europe and North America, and why there is no great prospect of change in this respect. We see why civilization flows slowly in the Arctic, with the sluggishness, though not the grandeur, of one of its own glaciers. We see the whole history of China and Japan interpreted as the saga of the rice field. We even get a new insight into the history of our own country.

The exposition of these matters is simple and direct, with a wealth of anecdote to make the subject clear. One marvels at the erudition which Dr. Huntington displays. He seems equally at home in geology, anthropology, meteorology, agriculture, economics, and biology. Few writers can cover so much ground with so little stumbling. For these reasons, it is difficult to say what part of the book makes the best showing. Perhaps the chapters on the tropics are the most stimulating. Certainly the tropics are visualized less accurately than any other part of the world by the average American.

Even writers who ought to know better, develop a wholly unjustifiable enthusiasm over the potentialities of equatorial lands. Casting uncritical eyes over the recent developments in Java, they forthwith picture Central Africa and Brazil as storehouses of wealth to be opened by a simple conjuration like "Open Sesame." But Java has special advantages—a good soil, well watered and well drained, an intelligent set of inhabitants adapted to tropical conditions, a reasonably decent climate in spite of its heat. And Java supports its thirty millions because they live on vegetables and get along without woolen clothes, protective houses, automobiles, radios, and other necessities and luxuries of civilization.

When the imperative needs of animal existence are satisfied, the Javanese feels that the satisfaction of other desires does not justify the extra work which they demand. "When such a spirit becomes common, as happens almost universally in regions that are hot and damp, the march of progress is bound to be slow."

> Where the standards of living thus become petrified at a low level, the density of population is bound to be great if a large supply of food is easily obtainable. It is simply a case of mathematics. So much land is available, so much food can be raised per acre, and so much is needed per person. The population is bound to increase until these three conditions balance each other. In a rice region, each family, let us say, needs only half as much food as in a certain more active region; each acre supplies six times as much food as in the active region; and each family is content with no more goods than can be bought if it raises one-fifth more food than it consumes. The man in the active region can raise only one-sixth as much per acre, the average member of his family consumes twice as much food, and the other needs which he considers imperative demand that he raise surplus crops amounting to twice as much as he and his family eat. In the one case the land will support thirty times as many people as in the other, and the contrast will be like that between Java and Iowa.

Incentives to progress are about the same in Central Africa and Brazil. The difficulties of effecting progressive changes are enormously greater. The soil is generally impoverished and waterlogged. Natural vegetation grows so rank that hacking it away is as hopeless a job as decapitating the Hydra; cultivated crops grow less vigorously. Diseases stalk about. It is the happy home of bacteria. Storage is almost impossible. Transportation is costly. Labor is inefficient.

When one reads Huntington, he begins to think that those who take the contract of conquering the continental tropics will wish to exchange places with Hercules for a period of rest and relaxation. Moreover, it is a question whether the game is worth the candle. Says the author:

> We hear so much about tropical products and tropical trade that we often greatly exaggerate their importance. How many truly tropical products are really important and how great is our trade in them? To begin with the genuine food products, sugar is far and away the leader—the most important of all tropical products whether foods or raw materials. The United States imports close to four hundred million dollars' worth of it—the largest of all our imports. Coconuts in various forms, including copra, palm oil, and the shredded meat, come next among tropical foods, but are worth only forty or fifty million; then come bananas, worth scarcely half as much. All the other tropical foods such as pineapples, Brazil nuts, tapioca, rice, and chicle for chewing gum are only worth about half as much as the bananas.

But the temptation to quote is too strong. I must desist. One should read the book. It will repay study. There are facts galore. There are hypotheses. There are speculations. There are even mysteries. For example, the Mayas developed a high civilization in a poor climate; the Indians developed no civilization in a good climate. Why? Again, "in some far future," says the author, "irrigation may enable the twelve million or more square miles where the climate is too dry for agriculture to support enough people to double the world's population." I am sure that Dr. Elwood Mead, our most distinguished irrigation engineer, will appreciate this little mystery. The problem is: find the water.

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The Bowling Green

Seventeenth Century Lyrics

THERE ought to be a happy flutter among seventeenth-century kinsprits when they come upon Norman Ault's fine anthology, "Seventeenth Century Lyrics," published by Longmans, Green and Co. ($3.50). If I were the publisher's publicity man I should flit eagerly into the offices of the daily gazettes with tidings about this book, for to the world that cares for poetry it is News indeed. It is a shining example of the fun that can be had in the travail of scholarship.

One might have thought that the field of English verse in that singing century had been fairly well culled. Yet mark you: here is a volume of some 500 pages of which nearly one-third consists of poems never reprinted since the seventeenth century; and which contains 33 poems *never printed before anywhere*—including the discovery of at least one poet of high quality (Thomas Beaumont) hitherto quite unknown. Mr. Ault prints five love-songs, also unknown before, by the Duke of Newcastle, and has done notable work in restoring to their true authors some well-known pieces that have been wrongly assigned. We have to take away from our old friend Sir John Suckling, for example, the famous "When, dearest, I but think on thee." It was written by Felltham. It is pleasing to learn that Bishop Morley (the one Pepys described as such a dull preacher) now is awarded the authorship of the very pretty Epitaph on Mistress Mary Prideaux:

. . . . and howe'er
Her long sleep may alter her,
Her soul will know her body straight,
'Twas made so fit for't, no deceit
Can suit another to it, none
Clothe it so neatly as its own.

If I were to tell you plainly what fun the zealot of lyrics can have in this palace of pleasures, you would think I exaggerate. For even to the amateur of such matters there is much here that is entirely new. The seventeenth century was a time when men wrote like this:

So have I seen a silver swan,
As in a watery looking-glass,
Viewing her whiter form, and then
Courting herself with lovely grace:
As now she doth herself herself admire,
Being at once the fuel and the fire—

and we do not even know the name of the author of so adorable a trifle. Think then of finding in clear print some thirty delicious songs that have lain these three hundred years in yellowing paper. The woman's reply to man's madrigals—the Answering Voice as some felicitous anthologist called it—comes too rarely to our ears from that old time. Here is one, written before 1649 but never printed, which Mr. Ault gives us:

ON A ROSEBUD SENT TO HER LOVER

The tender bud within herself doth close
With secret sweetness till it prove a rose;
And then as fit for profit as for pleasure
Yields sweet content to him that gains the treasure:
So she that sent this, yet a bud unblown,
In time may prove a rose, and be your own.

There is a curious charm in these nameless voices that come to us from the vaults of the British Museum or the sweet musty air of Bodleian. Who will write us the poem—which ought to be written on these unknown poets of the Seventeenth Century now coming into print for the first time? Here is one of their pretty grievances—

Long annoys and short contentings,
Short rewards for long tormentings,
Vain desires and hopes deceiving,
Death that lives yet life bereaving,
Feigned smiles and tears unfeigned—
So lives he that's with love pained.

Count the flowers the meadows staining,
Count the bubbles in the raining,
Number all the stars adorning
Night, and dew-drops of the morning—
More by thousands are the cumber
Nightly breaks poor lovers' slumber.

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Of the Thomas Beaumont whom Mr. Ault has discovered we know nothing but that he was writing about 1640-50. You can savor his quality from his graceful inscription for a gift-book:

TO HIS MISTRESS,
SENDING HER THE ARCADIA

Go, happy book, and let my Candia see
In thee the emblem of herself and me.
When she surveys thy story (thou shalt stand
Charmed in the whiter circle of her hand,
Rocked on the ivory cradle of her knee,
Her bright love-ruling stars bent over thee)
A Delphic fury in thy leaves shall swell
And all thy fictions turn to oracle.
For where thy quainter language draws each line
Of Beauty's map, and by a skill divine
Upon it does each native grace confer,
They will appear descriptions of her.
And where thy amorous passions best discover
The rocky firmness of a constant lover,
They lively show those purer flames that rest
Still burning on the altar in my breast.
So thou'rt her glass where she herself may see,
And in true lovers' parts remember me.

Candia, one feels sure, could not resist the appeal in another of Tom Beaumont's canzoni—

. . . oh let not then within
Your beauty's white inn lodged be
So black a guest as cruelty.

The "cruelty" of seventeenth century ladies is a familiar indignation of their versifiers; it is agreeable then to find Henry Bold (1627-83) exclaiming, in "Phyllis, forbear a while:"

I love a coming lady, faith! I do;
But now and then I'd have her scornful too.
O'ercloud those eyes of thine, bo-peep thy features;
Warm with an April shine, scorch not thy creatures:
Still to display thy ware, still to be fooling,
Argues how rude you are in Cupid's schooling. . . .
Be kind and coy by turns, be calm and rough,
And buckle now and then, and that's enough.

Which reminds me, quite inapropos, that I'll warrant you've forgotten who it was who first put the phrase the Girl-Friend, in its modern connotation, into current literature. It was Joseph Conrad, fifteen years ago. See chapter two of "Chance."

Perhaps, in some of these sevententh century verses about the Girl-Friend, there were prudent reasons for anonymity. But how this delightful one must have prospered from lip to lip—

Sabina has a thousand charms
To captivate my heart;
Her lovely eyes are Cupid's arms,
And every look a dart:
But when the beauteous idiot speaks,
She cures me of my pain;
Her tongue the servile fetter breaks
And frees her slave again.

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Not till you hold in your hand Mr. Ault's compact, beautifully printed, and well arranged book can you possibly gauge the rich delight he has gathered for us. Scholars will pay tribute to the contribution his appended notes make to the difficult bibliography of the seventeenth century. One comment is particularly important. In his task of working through MSS and song-books (comprising probably 20,000 poems in all) he checked up the number of times any given poem occurred in the various collections of the century. As he says, he held in his hands "the key to a historical study of poetic appreciation in the period." So he is able to tell us what were the most popular poems of that era, between the death of Shakespeare and the emergence of Pope. Judging by the number of times they were quoted and reprinted he ranks them thus: (1) Herrick's "Gather Ye Rose-Buds," (2) Suckling's "Ballad Upon a Wedding," (3) Strode's "On Chloris Walking in the Snow." It is excellent to hear that Shirley's tremendous "The glories of our blood and state" holds a tie-place, with other less-known pieces, for fourth position. Such reckonings, while not to be taken too severely, are of great interest.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

The Folder

The cheerful Editor having offered the Bowling Green some extra space, we propose to employ it henceforward for various items of oddity and occasion that accumulate in the Folder.

Allusion to Mary Tighe, and her influence on Keats, has brought in a surprising number of remarks, coming even from as far off as Honolulu. Harry Kemp very kindly sent me a copy of his excellent anthology "The Bronze Treasury," and writes:

Your note on the influence the poetry of Mrs. Tighe had on the work of Keats interested me. I knew slightly of it, but, like you, had never guessed its extent. Of course both Mrs. Tighe and Keats were influenced by Shakerley Marmion and Chamberlayne! . . . but do you know that I've made a further discovery just as important? I have traced the source of Keats's Ode to a Nightingale to an ode to a nightingale by Francis Hoyland . . . who lived years before Keats (circa 1735) and similarly died of consumption at an early age. When I made this discovery, a finer blood ran through my veins, and I was thrilled for days like an explorer who has got into a new country. I've sent you a copy of my Bronze Treasury, so you can see for yourself.

Keats owed much to obscure poets—to Shakerley Marmion, William Chamberlayne . . . in one instance, to George Stephney, in another, to Lovibond . . . but never, in my most unrestrained, most jocund moments of literary sleuthing, would I accuse Keats of straight theft. Like Shakespeare, whatever of silver he touched—or baser metal—he left golden!

But that old moral prater, Wordsworth (for all his greatness) pilfered three lines directly from Skelton. I was sore at Wordsworth doubly, on this discovery—because he continually preaches honesty, and moral honor. I could have bawled him out personally, if I could have gotten at him!

Byron appropriated almost as directly from George Gascoigne, and from Dodsley. I think I could write a book as rousing as a good novel, on the history and evolution of literary theft and plagiarism, conscious and unconscious.

HARRY KEMP.

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Mr. Francis Berry, the well known wine merchant of St. James's Street, London (perhaps you remember Muirhead Bone's drawing of his shop, in James Bone's "London Perambulator") was in New York lately. Believing that this department has specialized on Burgundies, and knows too little about the Bordeaux, Mr. Berry gave us a copy of H. Warner Allen's charming little book on Claret (London: Fisher Unwin). About the same time arrives from a Cotswold connoisseur, whom we do not identify, but whose style may give him away to some readers, these meditations:

I wish I could say you a few wise words about clarets. But you're right in taking Burgundy to your heart, and other relevant organs, first. It really is, *me judice*, the winiest of wines, the nearest to a G.C.M. and universal basis of all the kindly wines of the earth, the one to vote for if all wines but one were to be massacred by some thrice-to-be-blasted Herod, the one of which Nature might most complacently stand up and say to all the world, This was a wine.

En voila de l'eloquence—at least the willingness to salute the beautiful and good in one of its divinest forms.

I am reading Younghusband's ardent book about Life in the Stars, which, like all books about Stars, makes one feel how little one has ever conceived the enormity of their number, distance apart, heat in the innards and so on. And then it suddenly flashed on me that I had been just as far from conceiving what a terrific, unthinkable, impious Ajax-like emprise your country had essayed in trying to drown all Burgundies, all clarets, all Moselles, in endless night. "Just imagine," I said to myself, "growing up and only *hearing* of Falernian!" Oh, I have ta'en too little thought for this, I reflected, and felt a great compassion for all American boys who read classics.

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"The Winged Horse," that admirable book about poets and poetry by Joseph Auslander and Frank Ernest Hill, contains what is, I think, a quite new anecdote. After speaking of the Civil War:

Years later, a New York reporter was talking with a labourer named Rafferty, working in a field by the road. Rafferty told the reporter how he had been in the hospital during the war. He had been wounded badly in the leg, and the doctors told him they must take off the leg to save his life. He protested, but no one would listen to him. Then he told his trouble to a tall rough-looking man "with the face of an angel" whom he had seen going about helping the other soldiers. This man, after inquiring carefully about the leg, said: "May your mind rest easy, my boy; they shan't take it off." Rafferty went on to tell the reporter how he was cheered by this promise, but his eyes filled with tears and his voice choked as he thought of it. Finally, he slapped his leg with his hand and cried: "This is the leg that man saved for me." He couldn't remember the name of his benefactor. He thought it might be Whitcomb. When the reporter suggested Walt Whitman, Rafferty seized his hand and cried: "That's the man, that's the man; do you know him?"

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From my favorite weekly, *Variety*, I learn the schedule of rules and fines in a Minstrel Show back in the lively days of 1905. If you, as an 'artist,' signed up with the Minstrels, here's what you had to look out for:

1.—Drunkenness. Immediate discharge. No fine.
2.—Late at Rehearsal, $1.00.
3.—Late at Parade, $1.00.
4.—Missing Parade, $2.00.
5.—Stage wait, $1.00.
6.—Playing of Musical Instruments in Hotels, $2.00. Theatre at your disposal.
7.—Loud Arguments or Swearing in Hotels or Theatre, $1.00.
8.—Muddy Shoes in Parade, $1.00.
9.—Dirty Shirt Fronts, Collars and Cuffs, on First Part, $1.00.
10.—And most important, Mashing within 2 blocks of Hotel or Theatre, $5.00.

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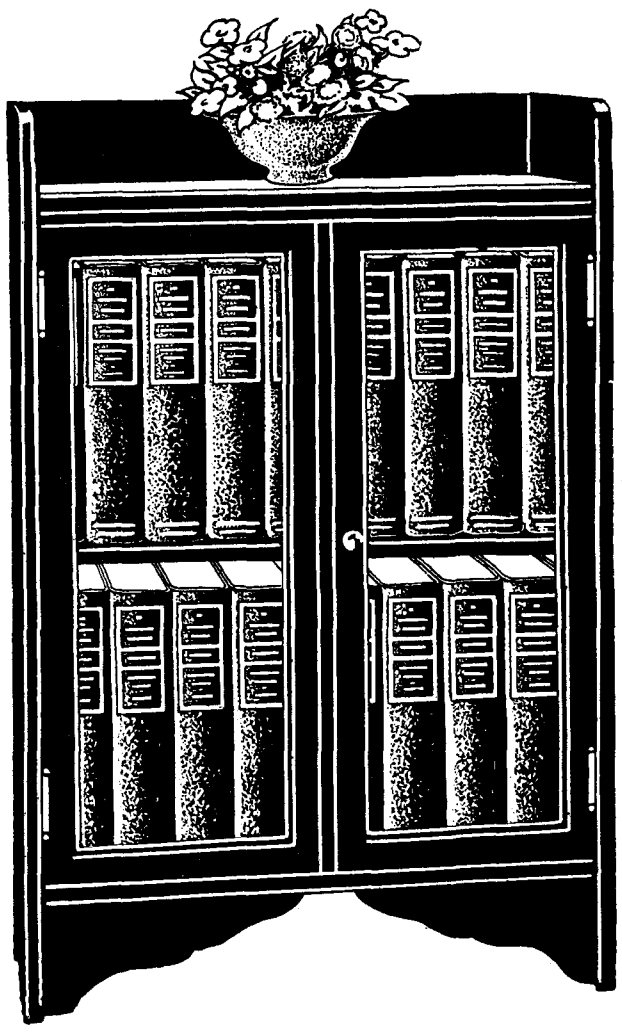

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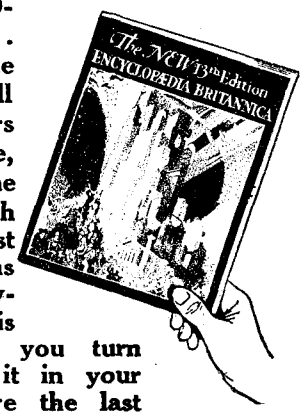

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Books of Special Interest

The Short Story

O. HENRY MEMORIAL AWARD: PRIZE STORIES OF 1927. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1928.

Reviewed by GERTRUDE MORRISON

THE short story comes into its own for no better reasons than those which have made William Allen White and Brander Matthews fearful that the Great American Novel never can be written, "Partly because America is of so many parts, castes, conditions, locations, minds, backgrounds, hearts —but it is possible to tell of American life, all of it, and that through the short story."

In the O. Henry Memorial Award: "Prize Stories of 1927," geographically the range is from the South, where one-third of the stories find their setting, to New York, South Dakota, Isle Breville, "where the French mulattoes live," to France itself; from a church filled with frightened colored people to a room jammed "full to overflowing with curled cropped heads, with ivory arms and shoulders, with silk and lace and chiffon, with legs," from hearts whose owners take meticulous care that they syncopate only to the emotions aroused in a Night Club to one—"The Scarlet Woman"—"who had such faith in love that she sacrificed all her life to it."

The story-reading public is becoming critical. Writers must now serve what they and their anthologists have created. A step toward initiation into technique itself is achieved when, in the Introduction, the Committee points out the contending forces that have made each story possible.

This volume, more than any preceding it in the series, commands the attention of the technician. In "Child of God," (Roark Bradford), which receives first prize, there is a break, but so skilfully handled its fracture would have to be X-rayed to certainty. A poor colored devil goes straight from the trap beneath his feet to his God, only to be told by Him to go back and finish the speech the hangman interrupted. "I jes' wanner say I ain't got no hard feelins agin nobody an' I don' want nobody to has no hard feelins again me. An' I wants to fee you all in heaven."

A year from now, if one looks over the titles, with the possible exception of "Child of God," the stories that will jump first from his memory will be "The Killers" (Ernest Hemingway; Second Prize), and "Night Club" (Katharine Brush). If their concise brevity renders them dynamic, no less does psychology lend its aid. We have the lure of the unfinished. The Killers will get that man. But when and where? What's ahead of Babe, eloping from a Night Club with a man she hasn't known a week? The girl with the scissors, will she use them against her escort?

There is a similarity of theme in Mr. Bellah's "Fear" and in "He Man" (Marjory Stoneham Douglas)—a type of title not to be encouraged just as the latter, half sea, half aviation, links up "Fear" (aviation) and Bill Adams's "Jukes" (sea). Each of the three needs pruning.

Is this the year of the negro in fiction? Three from Mr. O'Brien's Year Book, four from the O. Henry volume; year after year the American negro appears in the short story, usually for lust or for religion; and sometimes, as in Mr. Fauset's "Symphonesque," the one almost runs into the other. Up to this year I have contended that the negro must still have a big reserve of native sweetness, so little has it been drawn on to furnish fiction! But the Judge's "six months" time and again has not taken the sweetness out of Bulldog any more than the shadow of the gallows got it out of Willie; nor is simplicity out of the Singing Women; nor integrity of character out of one who "Done Got Over."

"With Glory and Honor" (Elisabeth Cobb Chapman), is the story of a Jew reverting to race and, through his singing, interpreting his people even as in "Monkey Motions" (Eleanor Mercein Kelley) a negro measures his folk in a dance. He is vastly more than one of Carl Van Vechten's negroes performing the Charleston. With the exception of Julió Desnoyers dancing the Tango to a world that was "measuring its intelligence by the agility of its feet," and he who juggled before Our Lady, the dancers of fiction have usually been women.

It is pleasant to meet Ruth Suckow's "Little Girl from Town" if for no other reason—there are others—than that she is a little girl. Children are about as scarce in anthologies of the short story as in churches. "Four Dreams of Gram Perkins" (Ruth Sawyer) is a story of a self-appointed layer of a ghost. It could have sprung only from a soil once hovered over by the witches of New England.

Last in the volume, in some ways least, is "Shades of George Sand"—the cleverest title in the book. But—shades of anybody!—are we to believe that a girl growing up in a dingy grocery in South Dakota, hedged in by a fat, unimaginative mother, a self-effacing father, a spoiled brother, uses such words as "bayadere—colubrine—rachitic"? Yet, when her moist-handed, mouse-haired lover says, quite as surprisingly, "You've no right to cover up such eburnean loveliness—You're epical, we get *"Eburnean? What was that?* (I had to look it up myself.) *Matilda gasped. He talked like a book."* Then the author, Ellen DuPois Taylor, robs her characters of their verbal distinction by showing us that she, too, has a vocabulary. She has to answer for father's hair *fimbriating* his bald head. 'Tis as improbable as when, in the good old days of Augusta Evans Wilson, her heroine sat on the marble floor of the library reading Sanskrit until three in the morning!

A Travel Journal

KING COBRA. By HARRY HERVEY. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation. 1927. $4.

Reviewed by MARGARET MEAD

"FOR many months I had been living in a book—the book of my adventures in quest of a dead city," says Harry Hervey, and it is his peculiar quality of always seeing the present as part of a book, a book half-written, partly obliterated, filled with unread, half decipherable paragraphs, which gives "King Cobra" much of its undoubted charm. Of great service also is Mr. Hervey's unswerving and complete enthusiasm which made the name of Angkor a satisfactory symbol of romance from the atlas on the nursery floor to the actuality of the ruined temples in the heart of Indo-China. And there is still one other item of his special equipment for this kind of story-telling which Mr. Hervey shares with children and the primitive peoples whom he describes so sympathetically. His thinking draws no line between the animate and the inanimate, images from one order of experience serve perfectly in a different order. It is without effort that he sees the jungle one moment as a vindicative monster, the next as an annihilating river beneath which a whole civilization drowns.

The book is given form and climax by the search for an unchronicled, ruined city, Wat Phu, whose tale he had heard from the lips of a stranger in a bar in Singapore. But three-quarters of the volume deals with the journey, with Saïgon and its ghostly reminiscences of Paris, and the spiritual miscegenation of Indo-China and the French, with Angkor Thom, and the long trip up the Me-Kong, punctuated with disaster because the coolie smoked too much opium at the wheel. No smallest detail is recorded for itself alone. All are symbols, of the decay of one régime, the slow torturous birth of another, the triumph of one people over another, the substitution of a religion of peace for a religion of death, of the bitter landmarks which strew the path of western empire; each present fact trails behind it a train upon which its past or future implications are delicately, unpedantically traced.

It is an exciting background, the history of the Khmers and their great mushroom kingdom in Cambodia which vanished in the course of three centuries; this kingdom which a Chinese ambassador describes in the zenith of its power in 1295, and a Portuguese explorer found a heap of ruins in 1570. Mr. Hervey knows his history, or quite enough of it to make each step in his journey significant. His book is the tale of what one man, and he an exceedingly romantic one, saw and thought.

This is a record for those who wish the kingdoms of fantasy bodied forth in terms of history and geography, built upon the data of actual experience, but stripped of all dulness and infused with the spirit of unflagging romance.

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Books of Special Interest

A Man of Gusto

HENRY THOREAU, THE COSMIC YANKEE. By J. BROOKS ATKINSON. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1927.

Reviewed by HARRY HAYDEN CLARK
Middlebury College

HERE is an attractive little book which should lead many who have wrongly considered Thoreau a "sulker" to catch Mr. Atkinson's contagious enthusiasm for the cosmic Yankee's "enjoyment of life," the "tremendous gusto of his career," and "the lambent flame of beauty in his writing." In the same "economical, deep-bitted strokes" he attributes to Thoreau, the author etches the portrait of the "poet-naturalist-philosopher" in he first chapter, and then he proceeds—in a delightfully pungent, sharp-edged, salty style—to present Thoreau adventuring on life and to discuss his relations with Emerson, his "message," his books, his humor, his "Journals," and finally the success of his philosophy as manifested in his testimony regarding his own happiness. Readers of the ardent and merited praise of the "Journals"—once so formidable in their many volumes—will be glad to avail themselves of "The Heart of Thoreau's Journals," lately published, admirably selected and edited by another lover of Thoreau—Odell Shepard. Mr. Atkinson finds that "the essence of his thinking was never more apt than it is now." . . . "If in the course of time, we reconcile our instrumentalism with the individual man, if we reclaim the individual from the jumble of material living and discover the true sources of happiness, inevitably we shall go to Thoreau for the vision."

Mr. Atkinson's book is in general a sympathetic, admirably written, but somewhat unsound introduction to Thoreau; it may antidote earlier criticism in stressing the zest of his life and the occasional lyric beauty of his writing. It is, however, somewhat one-sided in dealing with Thoreau's thought, especially his all-important attitude toward nature. Was he a pantheist? It is misleading to insist so strongly that he was "a foster-child of nature," that his "supreme message . . . was merely the enjoyment of life," that he longed for "union with nature," that the chapter on Economy is simply "exhilarating shadow-boxing," and that "the poetry and the fun of the adventure remain the dominant characteristics of Walden." Now the Concord seer was a good deal more than an overgrown Boy Scout. What is needed here is balancing, an ability to see both sides of the man, or that penetrating discrimination displayed by Professor Norman Foerster in his epoch-making study of "Nature in American Literature." Mr. Atkinson very rightly pays homage to Thoreau's nobility of character, but without perceiving how that nobility was acquired.

Let Thoreau testify to his own humanism. Instead of worshipping nature as "the guardian" of his "moral being" as the youthful Wordsworth did, instead of saying that we may "unhesitatingly commit the guidance of life to instinct" as Schiller did, the cosmic Yankee declares: "What is peculiar in the life of a man consists not in his obedience, but his opposition, to his instincts. In one way or another he strives to live a *super*-natural life." He is, I believe, a seeker of moral perfection in his way, as the New England Puritans were in their way. Scorning the romantic notion of natural goodness, he is "conscious of an animal in us, which awakens in proportion as our higher nature slumbers. It is reptile and sensual, and perhaps cannot be wholly expelled." Passionately devoted as he is to the simplicity and beauty of nature, he is forever conscious that "we are not wholly involved in nature," he is aware of "a certain doubleness," and like St. Paul he distinguishes sharply between "the law of the members" and "the law of the spirit," between Emerson's "law for things" and "law for man." The child of nature can say, "Nature is hard to be overcome, *but she must be overcome.*" The chapter on "Higher Laws" is an extended treatment of the necessity of conquering nature, instinct, and our animal inheritance in order that we may abide by the higher laws of man. Had Mr. Atkinson not ignored Thoreau's intellectual heritage and his relation to the Romantic Movement, the contrast between Thoreau and the romanticists would have been obvious. The "naturalist" confesses he cannot even think in the midst of nature: "True, out-of-doors my thought is commonly drowned. . . . I expand more surely in my chamber."

It is in his tendency to ignore that side of Thoreau which I have been illustrating—I think the nobler side—that Mr. Atkinson invites the charge of presenting an attractive but somewhat unfaithful portrait of the man who is perhaps America's soundest thinker.

On Education

WHY STOP LEARNING? By DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1927. $2.

Reviewed by GLADYS GRAHAM

DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER'S interest in education has run like an under-current beneath the surface of her novels. Brought up in an academic atmosphere, studying at several American universities and in Europe, acting as secretary of the Horace Mann School in New York and as a member of the State Board of Education of Vermont, Mrs. Fisher has always had her finger on the educational pulse of the country and is thoroughly qualified to speak concerning "a problem compared to which the riddle of the Sphinx looks like a sum in first-grade arithmetic, the problem of getting everybody in a democracy educated." The problem so defined is very fully treated in "Why Stop Learning?" wherein Mrs. Fisher foregoes fiction to write what she calls a running commentary on the educational research reports of the Carnegie Corporation and many others.

It is education, not literacy, with which "Why Stop Learning?" deals, as the author very emphatically makes clear. Complete literacy in the United States is now practically an accomplished fact. A little over one hundred years ago even the idea of making literate every inhabitant of a large country was unheard of. When the idea finally did occur, America not unnaturally expected its accomplishment to usher in a millennium. Yet here we all are today reading and writing and doing a little arithmetic, and not the slightest sign of a millennium upon the horizon. In our struggle after literacy, education has eluded us. "Schools, even the best schools, can only give . . . schooling. Education must be mixed and seasoned with life experience, which is the one element no school can give and no young person can have." And yet "with hardly an exception, the national attempt toward education has concentrated itself upon the minds of our youth."

Comparatively unobserved, at least as far as directional significance is concerned, there have been growing up in America various institutions which make voluntary post-school education possible. These may be scattered and fumbling attempts in the face of a critical situation, but here, Mrs. Fisher feels, we must look for some answer to the problem of producing an educated citizenry. To the more important of these institutions "Why Stop Learning?" devotes a chapter each, treating them historically as far as the shortness of their life-spans permits and prophesying a little as to what they may develop into. The section on "Correspondence Schools" is packed with vivid facts concerning the piratic practices of the dishonest members of this group. To the casual reader it will come with something of a shock to discover that he himself might in thirty-two states of the Union open a correspondence school without any preparation whatever and be quite within his legal rights in granting whatever degrees he might fancy in the arts and sciences. It is surprising reading. The chapter on "The Free Public Library" lacks this hair-raising element but becomes in Mrs. Fisher's hands a dramatic tale, beginning with "a queer, half-baked product of the revolutionary upheaval in France—a gesticulating, indiscreetly noisy Frenchman named Vattemare," the faher of the free public library; revealing a committee in Boston, disturbed by the gift of fifty volumes from the City of Paris, grudgingly providing "a place for same;" and coming down to a most enthusiastic interpretation of the work and ideals of present-day librarians.

Other chapters deal with Museums, Lyceums, Extension Courses, Parents-as-Students, Workers' Education. A presentation of "Women's Clubs" gives a decidedly foreshortened view of the time extent of women's activity and deals so fully with a particular club, scarcely exceptional, that the more general club work in adult education is somewhat obscured. "What Other People Are Doing," on the other hand, is full of interesting and new material, especially the sketch of the Danish adult school system. Although the book is written for the general reader rather than specialists, it is difficult to understand why Mrs. Fisher has adopted a style (so unlike her natural one) of somewhat slangy journalese in a work pleading for deeper spiritual and cultural values.

A Stock-Taking

THE SCIENTIFIC HABIT OF THOUGHT. By FREDERICK BARRY. New York: Columbia University Press. 1927. $3.50.

Reviewed by P. B. McDONALD
New York University

HERE is a book that should be read by every teacher of science and research-worker in the country. It is a sympathetic but critical stock-taking of our modern science and scientists written by a man of unusually broad attainments. But the reader should be warned in advance to read the last chapter first. Like many scientific lecturers Doctor Barry (who is assistant professor of the interesting new subject, History of Science, at Columbia University) lays down his difficult theses first, and warms into an extremely human and pertinent commentator when he has the professional abstractions out of the way. The first two chapters are a little too concentrated and meaty; the last two are a delight.

Says the author in part:

> There has come about a subtle change in the tone of cultivated society. The educated man whose interests are restricted to the older humanistic range feels, oddly, not out of place but somewhat detached. He suspects that he no longer shares in its deeper concerns. He is made to feel that he is living on the surface of things; out of touch with great events, the stir of which he feels but cannot grasp, the significance of which he surmises but does not clearly understand. . . . There is an unmistakable tone of earnestness in nearly all discussion. Its tone is serious. The pleasant allusive interchange of thought, the whimsicality, the repartee, is seldom heard. . . . Everywhere and at every hour the cultivated world seems spontaneously and with cheerful earnestness to be going back to school. . . . The scientific discoveries of the nineteenth century have actually remodelled the structure of western civilization. . . The foundation of all cultural education henceforth must be significant knowledge. . . . Our father's education was certainly too thin.

From these significant excerpts, it must not be inferred that the book is merely a Huxleyian or Wellsian argument for education based on science instead of on the classics. The unique fact about the book is that it breaks new ground. In his laboratory at Columbia, Dr. Barry has been doing pioneer thinking in assessing science and linking it up with metaphysics. How few scientists, for example, trace scientific concepts back to the philosophical implications of the Pythagoreans, the Eleatics, the Atomists, and the Peripatetics. Such liaison tracing is of great importance at this stage of our scientific development, as is scarcely necessary to point out. The natural corollary of reading the book is to wish for its 360 pages to be expanded by additional commentaries and concrete applications into a larger volume. For example, the consequences of our scientists' predilection for empiricism, pragmatism, and skepticism could be revealed in a more intimate and clear-headed way than Professor Dewey has so far seen fit to do. The implication of James and the neo-realists, and of Russell and his changing premises, might be woven illuminatingly into the picture. But, most interesting of all, the chapter on the elements of theory could be indefinitely expanded to include fuller interpretation of the history of science fresh from the author's lectures to the fortunate Columbia students in those classes. Dr. Barry is one of the few men who really know what and how scientists think and have thought; his greatest fault is his fear of criticism from the specialist and pedant for being too discursive—or (that dreaded word in scientific circles) too "popular."

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Foreign Literature

A Tale in Verse

TOM UND SYLVESTER. By EMIL LUDWIG. Berlin: Ernst Rowohlt. 1927.

Reviewed by A. W. G. RANDALL

THIS is either a youthful effort on the part of the now world-famous biographer of emperors and chancellors, or the result of a thinking-back to youthful experiences. The publishers' "puff" speaks of Wieland, but the poem more readily recalls the lighthearted side of Byron to readers of English, in its combination of wit, pleasant cynicism, unusual situation, and nature-poetry never quite wholehearted enough in its enthusiasm to do away with the general effect of badinage. Byron, we feel, would have been quite capable of opening a long tale in verse with a scene in a sleeping-car. It is there, going over the St. Gotthard pass, that Tom and Sylvester meet. They strike up a friendship, find they are persons of leisure and taste, fall in love, as Herr Ludwig has clearly done, with that Southern landscape which greets your delighted gaze once the long tunnel is passed, and arrange to stay together in a village of the Ticino uplands. Here, like happy schoolboys, they wander about the hills, jump over streams, find pleasure in the music of the waterfalls. Soon, of course, they discover an Eve in this Eden, a strapping young person of outdoor tastes, but with freshness, grace, and an excellent figure. She lives alone with her father in a cottage in the wood; since the death of his wife the old man has retired to this Paradise and settled down as the friend and benefactor of the village below. Both Tom and Sylvester fall in love with Valeska, make friends with the father as a first step, and join in the instrumental quartettes every evening in the cottage, make approving comments on the old man's excellent taste in food and wine.

Tom's passion for Valeska grows, but she is still hesitating—her retired life in the village has made her shy. Naturally, one day, when Tom surprises her at her bath in the pool at the foot of the waterfall, she is shocked by his attack, overwhelmed by shame, and gives vigorous expression to her feelings on recovery. The upshot is that Tom retires leaving the field to Sylvester, who, pursuing more warily, gains her and is duly married soon after in the Burgomaster's office, much to the scandal of the pious villagers, to whom, of course, a mere civil marriage is no marriage at all. Valeska's married happiness is marred by the shadow of a thought that it was Tom whom she had loved; he, at any rate, had taught her what passion was and had awakened her instincts. She has a child, Felix, and the end, a good specimen of the poet's malicious humor, represents the old man playing alone with his grandchild:

Der Alte sieht ihn an, halb schlau, halb fromm,
Er zieht und denkt dabei:—Der ganze Tom.

Hardly a plot to fill out a short story in prose, but the handling of it gives it interest and freshness. As a diversion, too, from Herr Ludwig's business of conjuring up the vanished great it has novelty, but one hardly feels poetry likely to become his main literary occupation.

Bojer's Latest

DET NYE TEMPEL (The New Temple). By JOHAN BOJER. Oslo: Norsk Gyldendal. 1927.

Reviewed by JULIUS MORITZER

READERS of Scandinavian literature in translation may recall "The Great Hunger" with which Johan Bojer made his earlier impression on the American public through a characterization that stamped him as one of the outstanding European novelists of the day. That he has not written *finis* to "The Great Hunger" is apparent from the fact that in his most recent novel, "The New Temple," the chief character of the former work, Per Holm, makes his reappearance. And where the religious theme was barely intimated before, Bojer now enters that domain somewhat prepared, it seems, to champion religion for what it does.

In "The Great Hunger" we saw Per Holm, the one-time world-famous engineer, finally reduced to poverty, when all that was good in him rose up so that he could even exhibit love toward the one who had done him the greatest injury. In "The New Temple," his son Lorents, as minister of the State Church, convinces the elder Holm that despite the ecclesiasticism that he detests, the Supreme Being is to be found in the minds of men. Lorents, as a matter of fact, is Johan Bojer's instrumentality for telling how he himself feels on the subject of religion. As an interpreter of a humane-religious individualism, Bojer apparently finds in the church a community of interest. Communism, capitalism, and all the etceteras identified with these opposing forces are featured in "The New Temple."

The moral of Johan Bojer's preachment is not far to seek. The abstract religious concept that he featured in "The Great Hunger" was not wholly satisfactory to him. He was not as yet ready to go the entire way and accept religion in its dogmatic requirements. Nor is he willing to do more in "The New Temple" than to have Per Holm declare that as such a priest as he would like to be he would want to be wholly independent of dogmatic ecclesiasticism.

"The New Temple" is not the most convincing book by Johan Bojer, but it will occasion interesting comment and afford a further insight into the mental workings of this Norwegian man of letters.

Scholarship De Luxe

BIBLIOGRAPHIE DER GERMANISCHEN ZEITSCHRIFTEN. By Carl Diesch. Edited by FREDERICK W. J. HEUSER. Leipzig: Verlag von Karl W. Hiersemann. 1927.

Reviewed by ALLEN W. PORTERFIELD

THIS monumental work is scholarship *de luxe*. The handsome type on the great folio pages is a pleasure to behold. Moderation, however, would be in order if the volume were beautiful scholarship and nothing more. But it is also a priceless aid to scholarship; it is the guide of guides to those who may choose to work in the Germanic field in the future.

Quite apart from the twenty-eight pages of supplementary and corrective entries, the bibliography lists 4,642 magazines that deal, or have dealt, with literary, scientific, and general or popular themes; and it gives the essential data regarding them with an accuracy and condensation that puts Pierre Athanase Larousse to shame; it even routes a Continental time-table for *multum in parvo*, telling not only what the magazine was like, who edited it, and where it was published, but, what will probably prove most valuable of all, where the files of it may now be found.

Great and helpful though the compilation is, perfection was not to be expected. The list of abbreviations should have been explained in greater detail. As it stands, the volume is a cross-word puzzle the solutions of which are given only in part; the remainder can easily be worked out by the user, but the editors might well have solved them completely. Then there is the missing matter. Item 3,478 is "Scandinavia. A monthly review . . . 1884-86. Chicago. [Br. Mus. (unvolist.)]." That is all very well; but if this is included, then what of the *Scandinavia* No. 1, Vol. I, of which appeared January, 1924, in the more vigorous of the two Dakotas, only to die the death less than two years later? What of *Arena. Tidsskrift for Literatur, Teater og Kritik*, that excellent monthly that began to come out at Oslo in 1922 and died before the first lustrum had been completed?

But even so, we can only congratulate the Germans on this admirable enterprise at the same time that we laud without reservation Professor Heuser for having attended so faithfully and intelligently to our own side of the business. He has done a difficult and useful task well.

A careful and fully documented study of the agrarian elements in the Norwegian state has recently appeared from the pen of Halvdan Koht. "Norsk Bondereising" (Oslo: Aschehoug), as the volume is called, is a chronicle of the "bonde," or peasant as the word is usually translated into English, incorrectly, according to the London *Times Literary Supplement*, which says of him that the bonde "was the concentrated essence of the Norwegian people, including elements from all the previously existing ranks of society, and preserving through centuries of alien administration its traditional and peculiar culture, language, and character." The author is one of the leading historians of his country, and his work is based on accurate and wide knowledge.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Art

DEGAS: An Intimate Portrait. By AMBROISE VOLLARD. Translated by Randolph T. Weaver. Greenberg. 1927. $3.

As compared with M. Vollard's rich reminiscences of Cézanne and Renoir, the present volume on Degas is thin pickings. There emerges a sort of Dickens character—a snappish and solitary old bachelor with, at bottom, a good heart. Even Degas's wit is slightly represented. Nothing seems quotable except the outburst to Monet before whose pictures Degas cried: "let me get out of here. Those reflections in the water hurt my eyes." To Vollard he added, "His (Monet's) pictures were always too draughty for me." This was more or less of a pleasantry, and probably only half meant, but it does emphasize the fact, which is about the only contribution of this book, that Degas's sympathy with the *pleinairistes*, with whom he was always and unwillingly—associated, was really the slightest. To M. Vollard he never made any of those monumental epigrams which constituted him the most formidable artist tongue of his day—such as the crushing rebuke to Whistler for his ostentation of wit. Surely this material could and should have been carried in Mr. Harold L. Van Doren's introduction, to the great enrichment of a book which, save for its sixteen fine illustrations, neat make, and obvious eligibility as a gift, is of small importance.

MODERN FRENCH ART. By *Russell Potter*. University of North Carolina Press. $1.

FLEMISH ART. By *Roger Fry*. Brentanos. $3.50 net.

ART STUDIES. Harvard University Press.

THE ESSENCE OF ARCHITECTURE. By *William Roger Greeley*. Van Nostrand. $2.50.

Belles Lettres

DICKENS DAYS IN BOSTON. By EDWARD F. PAYNE. Houghton Mifflin. 1927. $5.

From the purely literary or historical point of view this book can scarcely be considered a work of great importance, for it contains nothing, or very little, that was not perfectly well known before to all students and most lovers of the famous novelist. It throws no new light upon either the character or genius of Charles Dickens. But as it offers, in attractive and convenient shape, and in chronological order, a mass of contemporaneous records most industriously collected from a great variety of sources and biographies, diaries, daily journals, personal correspondence, etc.—not at everybody's immediate command, it will be a welcome addition to almost any bookshelf and revive fascinating memories. The matter, of course, even if old, is of perpetual interest. And Mr. Payne has done his work uncommonly well and with scrupulous fidelity, although somewhat inclined to give too much free play to his imagination in the absence of recorded fact. But his guesses are always fairly plausible. And he undoubtedly succeeds in reproducing vivid snap-shots illustrating the social and literary life of the Boston of 1842 and 1867, the changes that occurred during that period of notable intellectual activity, and in furnishing arresting glimpses of many nationally famous men in their youth and full maturity. In the interval between his two visits time wrought a transformation in the character and personality of Dickens, a transformation strongly emphasized by the striking portraits which enrich the book. It is difficult to recognize in the keen, worn, resolute, worldly-wise and bearded face of the aging master the beaming, rounded, boyish, alert but somewhat romantic—not to say, lackadaisical—features of the long-haired "Boy" as painted by Alexander. In both pictures, however, is the assurance of self-conscious power. A reperusal of the faithfully recorded evidence of the extraordinary popular interest displayed in him throughout both his first and second visits gives cause for some disquieting reflections. Would our masses of today show so vivid an interest in a great literary genius, foreign or domestic? What chance would a literary lion have as a counter attraction to a female channel swimmer or air-woman? Dickens, by his rare genius, completely justified the honors he received and the curiosity he excited and Mr. Payne's meticulous summary of the testimony of eye-witnesses of his triumph will doubtless bring new pleasure to the host of his admirers.

THE CULT OF SANTIAGO. Traditions, Myths, and Pilgrimages. By REV. JAMES S. STONE. Longmans, Green. 1927. $6.

Dr. Stone, who is rector emeritus of a Chicago church, calls his book "a sympathetic study." Because he is so patently a man of sympathies as wide as his reading, which is very extensive, so evidently a person of rich humanity and genuine goodness, even the most crabbed reviewer would hesitate before expressing an unfavorable opinion of his work. The present writer finds himself completely disarmed in dealing with the volume. If rigorous standards were applied to it, it would rouse one to fury by its discursive formlessness and lack of scholarly method. The study of medieval cults is not furthered by such publications. The book has no value in hagiology. Yet one must also say that it makes no pretence of such a purpose. It is intended for readers who know little or nothing about St. James of Spain, but who have time and inclination to explore the by-ways of the past. If they do not mind excursions to right and to left, if they can be content not to distinguish between actuality and legend, they may be very pleasantly beguiled. They will learn much about many things aside from the cult and legend of Santiago, and they will learn about them from a man who is eminent in wisdom and grace, even though not expert in hagiographical lore or in sifting historical evidence.

SOME GODDESSES OF THE PEN. By *Patrick Braybrooke*. Lippincott.

SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS RECONSIDERED. By *Samuel Butler*. Dutton. $3.

ELIZABETHAN PSYCHOLOGY AND SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS. By *Ruth Leila Anderson*. Iowa City, Ia.: University of Iowa.

PRUNES AND PRISMS. By *Charles Hall Grandgent*. Harvard University Press. $2.50.

CHARLES M. DOUGHTY. By *Barker Fairly*. Oxford University Press. $2.50.

COLLECTED ESSAYS OF ROBERT BRIDGES. Oxford University Press. $1.

Biography

VISCOUNT LEVERHULME. By His Son. Houghton Mifflin. 1927. $5.

The people of Stornoway on the island of Lewis gave Leverhulme an ovation when he landed there in June of 1918. Then, being Scotch, they gave him sympathetic assistance in the spending of his money, and according to his son, Leverhulme appeared to the men of Lewis as a fairy godfather, for he improved Stornoway harbor, organized the haphazard fishing industry, built roads, an ice plant, a steam laundry, reconstructed the gasworks, and introduced electric light. He was very busy.

Then in 1919 arose difficulties, rather obscure ones, over the division of farming lands. These continued, and in 1923 Leverhulme quit Stornoway and Lewis for Obbe on the island of Harris. Obbe shortly afterwards changed its name to Leverburgh, and the Leverhulme MacLine Drifters and Trawlers began to operate from its harbor.

It was a Stornoway man who gave us the tale of Leverhulme's puzzling performances up in the dour Hebrides, and he chuckled maliciously over the defeat of "the little grocer's" ambition to industrialize the island. Possibly there was a defeat. Yet the Leverhulme MacFisheries date from the time he touched at Stornoway, and now in every English high street the white front of the MacFisheries shops has become drearily familiar.

We give space to this minor venture here, for we hadn't expected to see the story set down at length in Leverhulme's biography. It is, and much else that overshadows it. This is the account of an immense industry that began with a small boy's probable dislike for cutting up long bars of tallowy soap into tablets suitable for the trade of Victorian England, and the biographer traces the growth of that industry in his father's footsteps all around the world. This is how there came to be a Port Sunlight redeeming the marshlands across the Mersey from Liverpool,—and to inquire on English soil what is manufactured at Port Sunlight invites pity even from those who do not use its product.

But apart from these chapters of British commercial history, there is a painstaking portrait of a rather kindly Victorian who "read some prayers from Robert Louis Stevenson" when no Sunday services were held aboard his steamer in the South Seas, who set his understrappers a good example by appearing in his office every morning at eight-thirty sharp, who kept "King Lear" and "David Copperfield" always by his bedside, and who at the age of seventy-three sturdily made a last voyage into tropical Africa out of a sense of duty.

W. E. GLADSTONE. By *Osbert Burdett*. Houghton Mifflin. $4.

THE YANKEE OF THE YARDS. By *Louis F. Swift*. Shaw.

LIFE, TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES. By *James Andrew Wilson*. Austin, Texas: Gammel's Bookstore.

CLOWNING THROUGH LIFE. By *Eddie Foy* and *Alvin Harlow*. Dutton. $5.

TOLSTOY. By *Hugh l'Anson Fausset*. Harcourt, *Brace*. $3.50.

A NEW PORTRAIT OF JAMES BOSWELL. By *Chauncey Brewster Tinker* and *Frederick Albert Pottle*. Harvard University Press.

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HENRY CRABB ROBINSON WITH THE WORDSWORTH CIRCLE. Edited by *Edith J. Morley*. Oxford University Press. 2 vols. $14.

THE DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY, 1912-1921. Edited by *H. W. C. Davis* and *J. R. H. Weaver*. Oxford University Press. $7.

Drama

THE MAKING OF AN IMMORTAL. By *George Moore*. New York: Bowling Green Press.

NUDEJAS. By *Georgiana Goddard King*. Longmans, Green. $2.50.

NINE PLAYS. By *Charles Rezinkoff*. Published by the Author, 5 West 4th Street, New York.

L'AIGLON. By *Edmond Rostand*. Translated by *Basil Davenport*. Yale University Press. $3.

SHAKESPEARE AND THE THEATRE. By *Members of the Shakespeare Association*. Oxford University Press. $5.50.

THE MAGIC MUSE. By *Hubert Griffith*. London: Allen & Unwin.

THREE EASTERN PLAYS. By *Edward and Theodosia Thompson*. London: Allen & Unwin.

Education

ELEMENTARY GEOGRAPHY. By *Frank M. McMurry* and *A. E. Parkins*. Macmillan.

BREAD LOAF TALKS ON TEACHING LITERATURE. By *Alfred M. Hitchcock*. Holt.

INTRODUCCION A LA HISTORIA DE LA AMERICA LATINA. By *Ernest James Hall* and *Francisco Aguilera*. Century. $1.25.

HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION. By *Herbert H. Foster*. Century. $2.75.

THE OPEN ROAD TO READING. By *Reed Smith* and *Annie Henshall Sutton*. Ginn.

KNOCK. By *Jules Romains*. Edited by Albert Douglas Menut and Dwight Ingersoll Chapman. Century.

PRINCIPLES OF MUSICAL EDUCATION. By *James L. Mursell*. Macmillan.

SYMBOLIC LOGIC. By *Henry Bradford Smith*. Crofts.

LA FAMILLE DUPONT. By *Louis Marchand*. Adapted by C. B. Bonner. Oxford. $1.

LA FARCE DU PENDU DEPENDU. By *Henri Ghéon* and *Le Carrosse du Saint-Sacrement*, by *Prosper Merimée*. Oxford. $1.35.

Fiction

VENTURE. By MAX EASTMAN. A. and C. Boni. 1927. $2.50.

Max Eastman, critic, poet, pacifist, cofounder of the *Masses*, and protestant against the entry of the United States into the European War, here writes his first novel. Tinged with his social and political beliefs, "Venture" is at times undeniably propagandist. Probably Mr. Eastman never can write a novel that is free from his particular attitude of protest. But then, there is no reason why he should divorce his literary work from his convictions—no reason, that is, unless they interfere with his writing good novels. This first try of his is by no means a failure; indeed, it is in many ways arresting and capable.

His most notable good quality is his vigor. We get from his pages a fine sense of living to the full, for the novel in character as well as in incident is rich and meaty. The story of Jo Hancock's adventures in New York is the somewhat familiar yet never commonplace story of a young man's efforts to know himself, to find his most rewarding relationship with life, and to find for himself a place in the world. The last sentence in the novel is this: "Jo . . . thought that perhaps real life can be lived a little after all—if you only make a few fundamental decisions." He was a poet by temperament, and full of a splendid zest for experience. He went into business; he ingenuously tried living on the money of his mistress; he threw himself into the work of the I.W.W., and, during each of his tentative days, he looked for a satisfying

(*Continued on next page*)

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The New Books

Fiction

(Continued from preceding page)

love. Some of the most successful chapters of the novel deal with Jo's adventures while he was aiding strikers during a great disturbance in the silk industry. But we must say regretfully, for we were pleased by much of the book, that Mr. Eastman's views on the social order interfere with the march of his narrative. We know him to be honest in his passions, but we wish that he had been more adroit in weaving them into the fabric of the novel.

"Venture" reminds us of Poole's "The Harbor." Both tell of the intellectual and spiritual adventures of a young man torn between the creed of wealth and the creed of the worker; in both we sense the power of modern business; both deal dramatically with a great strike. "The Harbor" is the better book, but Max Eastman will probably become the better novelist. He has imagination, restraint, energy, and a gift for full-blooded narrative.

THE OLD NICK. By F. W. BRONSON. Doubleday, Doran. 1928. $2.50.

Bronson is still a young novelist. About a year ago he gave us his first novel, "Spring Running," revealing himself then as rather in discipleship to Cyril Hume. For all that "Spring Running" had, in parts, a certain strength and freshness. This present book is a good deal closer-knit. The structure is better. In the main Nicholas Lord and his sons, who regard him as their best friend, are credible and rather interesting characters. There is some fulness of life in the book. Its women characters are fairly vivid. Yet the troubles that befall the family and the web that entangles them do not interest this reviewer forcibly enough. It is the style that is not sufficiently distinguished. Mr. Bronson has a story to tell and the gift of narration. But his gift is not as yet sufficiently great truly to enthrall us. "The Old Nick" remains a workmanlike novel, showing growth,—but falls behind the first flight of the season.

HERE ARE MYSTERIES. By J. G. LOCKHART. Stokes. 1927. $3.

This writer has given us heretofore several volumes of strange true stories of the sea. Now he has turned to historical mysteries. He ranges from narration of the case of the Austrian Archduke who vanished off Cape Horn to an account of Louis Charles, Dauphin of France, who, in the days of the Commune, and after the execution of his father and of his mother, Marie Antoinette, remained imprisoned till his death in the Temple,—through discussion of whether the Russian Emperor, Alexander First, did live after his supposed death as a hermit in a Siberian village, to the question: what, at the inception of the Spanish War, caused the first explosion on board the battleship *Maine*; and the mystery still enshrouding Lord Kitchener's death in the late Great War.

This book is written without any extraordinary fascination of style. Its narratives are seven in number, the others being the story of the heart of the Marquis of Montrose and the fairly familiar story of Kaspar Hauser. The late Andrew Lang handled this sort of thing with much more distinction and a keener sense of drama. Lockhart is not a major writer though an earnest searcher of history.

HIGH THURSDAY. By *Roger Burlingame*. Scribners. $2.

TWO FORSYTE INTERLUDES. By *John Galsworthy*. Scribners. 50 cents.

NOVEMBER NIGHT. By the author of "Miss Tiverton Goes Out." Bobbs-Merrill. $2.50.

THE CELIBATE FATHER. By *Will W. Whalen*. St. Louis: Herder. $2 net.

WHAT PRIESTS NEVER TELL. By *Will W. Whalen*. St. Louis: Herder. $2 net.

THE MAN BRANDERS. By *Frank C. Robertson*. Barse. $2.

CURSED BE THE TREASURE. By *H. B. Drake*. Macy-Masius. $2.

THE CHANGING ROAD. By *Howard MacGrath*. Doubleday, Doran. $2 net.

PRIZE STORIES OF 1927. Doubleday, Doran. $2.50 net.

THE DISTRICT BUNGALOW. By *Cecil Champain Louis*. Doubleday, Doran. $2 net.

MENCKENIANA. Knopf.

AMERICAN DETECTIVE STORIES. Chosen by *Carolyn Wells*. Oxford University Press. $1.50.

AMERICAN MYSTERY STORIES. Chosen by *Carolyn Wells*. Oxford University Press. $1.50.

THE POOR GENTLEMAN. By *Ian Hay*. Houghton Mifflin. $2.

SAGUSTO. By *Cecil Roberts*. Doubleday, Doran. $2.

PEACOCKS. By *Vennette Herron*. Doubleday, Doran. $2.50 net.

CROOKED. By *Maximilian Foster*. Lippincott.

THE VERDICT OF THE SEA. By *Alan Sullivan*. Dutton. $2.50.

THE WISE WIFE. By *Arthur Somers Roche*. Century. $1.75.

WOMAN POWER. By *Gustaf af Geijerstam*. American-Scandinavian Foundation. $2.50.

SHADOWS. By *Will Scott*. Macrae-Smith.

THE SMILING DEATH. By *Francis D. Grierson*. Clode. $2 net.

THE NUPTIAL FLIGHT. By *Edgar Lee Masters*. Boni & Liveright. $2.50.

EUROPE AT LOVE. By *Paul Morand*. Boni & Liveright. $6.

THE WIDENING PATH. By *Eleanor Thorne*. Avondale.

THE WITNESS AT THE WINDOW. By *Charles Barry*. Dutton. $2.

Foreign

VASES. By *Marc Chadourne*. Paris: Plon.

L'ECOLE ROMANTIQUE FRANCAISE. By *Jean Giraud*. Paris: Colin.

LA FONTAINE DIVINE. By *Fortuné Andrien*. Paris: Cahiers du Sud.

DALLA CONCA D'ORO AL "GOLDEN GATE." By *Gaspare Nicotri*.

GEISTIGE UND SITTLICHE WIRKUNGEN DES KRIEGES IN DEUTSCHLAND. By *Otto Baumgarten, Erich Foerster, Arnold Rademacher* and *Wilhelm Flitner*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt (Yale University Press).

LA NAVE DEGLI EROI. By *Clarice Taitufari*. Camptelli.

CRUAUTES DE LA NUIT. By *Roger Vitrac*. Marseilles: Cahiers du Sud.

LA PRAIRIE AUX NARCISSES. By *François-Paul Alibert*. Marseilles: Cahiers du Sud.

OLORON SAINTE-MARIE. By *Jules Seipervielle*. Marseilles: Cahiers du Sud.

MAECENAS. By *Joachim Stern*. Berlin: Joachim Stern.

DAS EINFLUSS DES KRIEGES AUF DIE LANDSWIRTSCHAFTLICHE PRODUKTION IN DEUTSCHLAND. By *Friedrich Aeroboe*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt (Yale University Press).

LA GUERRA E IL SISTEMA TRIBUTARIO ITALIANO. By *Luigi Einaudi Bari*: Laterza (Yale University Press).

LA LITTERATURE FRANÇAISE CONTEMPORAIRE. By *André Billy*. Paris: Colin.

LA VIE DES ARAIGNEES. By *J. H. Fabre*. Paris: Delagrave.

Government

OUR ANCIENT LIBERTIES. By *Leon Whipple*. Wilson.

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP. By *Charles E. Martin* and *William H. George*. Knopf.

PARTY GOVERNMENT IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. By *Paul DeWitt Hasbrouck*. Macmillan. $2.25.

READINGS IN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT. By *James K. Pollock*. Holt.

NEW GOVERNMENTS OF EASTERN EUROPE. By *Malbone W. Graham, Jr.* Holt. $5.

THE ORIGIN OF THE STATE. By *Robert H. Lowie*. Harcourt, Brace. $1.50.

History

DOCUMENTS OF RUSSIAN HISTORY. The Century Historical Series. Collected by FRANK ALFRED GOLDER, and revised by him after translation by EMANUEL ARONSBERG. Century. 1927. $4.

The documents herein presented cover the period of the War, the Provisional Government, and the early days of the Bolshevik Revolution. They are the first result of the investigation undertaken by Stanford University, in coöperation with the Soviet Government, with the intention of discovering what contribution, if any, Bolshevism has made to civilization.

Dr. Golder is himself an American citizen of Russian origin. He was in Russia with the A.R.A. throughout its work there, has visited Russia since the A.R.A. left that country, and intends, in the prosecution of his work, which has had the active support of Secretary Hoover, to return to Russia as occasion demands. The next study in the series will be in the field of Russian agriculture.

Some of the matter presented here has already appeared in more popular form in one or another of the various volumes of memoirs, but nowhere else has it been possible to find any such variety of first-hand testimony—from the intimate letters of the Royal family down through statesmen and generals to the earlier declarations of the Bolsheviki—nor the same objectivity.

Anybody can speak his mind about Soviet Russia today without running the risk, if he finds anything good there, of being regarded as an enemy of society. It is interesting to recall that these studies were undertaken, and received their support, both from Secretary Hoover and from Stanford University, at a time when such frankness was less easy.

THE ETRUSCANS. By *David Randall-MacIver*. Oxford University Press.

BUNKER HILL. By *Harold Murdock*. Houghton Mifflin.

SLAVE SHIPS AND SLAVING. Salem, Mass.: Marine Research Society. $7.50.

MASSACHUSETTS PRIVATEERS OF THE REVOLUTION. By *Gardner Weld Allen*. Massachusetts Historical Society.

Juvenile

(The Children's Bookshop will appear next week.)

The JINX SHIP. By HOWARD PEASE. Doubleday, Page. 1927.

Tod Moran, the seventeen year old hero of Mr. Pease's "The Tattoed Man," again "uses his gray cells" to solve the mystery of this haunted ship. From the moment the ill-omened Congo leaves her Brooklyn pier and slips away into the fog, until she blazes to her death in the Caribbean, thrill follows thrill. Murder, haunts, contraband, voodoo, black cat, hurricane, Devil drums, desperate adventure in the jungles of San Felipe, all overshadowed by the jinx which holds the Congo in its spell, compose a tale which should raise the hair of any normal boy. There is nothing here to aid in forming a literary taste nor, on the other hand, seriously to hinder its development.

STORY-LIVES OF MASTER WRITERS. By CHARLES HARLOW RAYMOND. Stokes. 1927. $2.50.

This is a series of biographical sketches ranging from Shakespeare and Keats to Mark Twain and Louisa Alcott, designed, one supposes, to meet the interests of boys and girls of high-school age or precocious younger children. Although there is a definite attempt to adapt the material to a limited class of readers, one questions whether the boy or girl who reads Keats or Browning would at the same time continue to be interested in Howard Pyle or Frances Hodgson Burnett. The biography of Defoe, with its richly romantic historical background, is ideally suited to students in secondary schools. That of Browning is probably the least successful in the book. The audience is not clearly defined.

In presenting biography to youthful readers Mr. Raymond has not entirely escaped sentimentality, white-washing, and moralizing, the usual vices of adult condescension. The facts used are, for the most part, accurate and carefully selected, although the latest scholarship, especially in the case of Tennyson, where it is most needed, has been sometimes neglected. Slight mistakes due to insufficient familiarity with British institutions are observed here and there. On the whole, one regrets that the schoolmaster, rather than the story-teller, is conspicuous in the enterprise of attracting young people to the best books.

JUST ONE MORE. Verse and Pictures by NATALIE JOHNSON VAN VLECK. Doubleday, Page. 1927. $2.50.

This is a cheerful, attractively illustrated little book of rhymes about two yellow-haired and somewhat too obviously affluent children. Mrs. Van Vleck is far more skilful with pencil and brush, than with her pen. The verses are pretty bad; yet we must testify, in fairness, that the child who read them to us liked them.

THE GOLDEN BIRD. By KATHARINE GIBSON. Illustrated by EDWIN G. SOMMER. Macmillan. 1927. $2.50.

These are nine of the stories told by Miss Gibson in her story hours for children in the Cleveland Museum of Art. They are legends of Egypt and Greece, Persia, China, and France.

Miscellaneous

NORWEGIAN SAILORS ON THE GREAT LAKES. By *Knut Gjerset*. Norwegian-American Historical Association.

A HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE, 1830-1841. By *Elie Halévy*. Translated by E. I. Watkins. Harcourt, Brace. $6.

THE MANUAL OF INDUSTRIAL SAFETY. By *Sidney J. Williams*. Shaw.

GALLANT LADIES. By *Cameron Rogers*. Harcourt, Brace. $3.50.

THE STORY OF THE FILMS. Edited by *Joseph P. Kennedy*. Shaw.

AUCTION BRIDGE SIDELIGHTS. By *R. E. Needham*. Vinal. $2.

THE GLAMOUR OF NEAR EAST EXCAVATION. By *James Baikie*. Lippincott.

READING FOR HONORS AT SWARTHMORE. By *Robert C. Brooks*. Oxford University Press. $2.

MY BEST GAMES OF CHESS. By *A. Alekhin*. Harcourt, Brace. $3.50.

THE HERITAGE OF MUSIC. Collected and Edited by Hubert J. Foss. Oxford University Press. $2.75.

EARLY AMERICAN GLASS. By *Rhea Mansfield Knittle*. Century. $4.

CLASSICAL MYTHS THAT LIVE TODAY. By *Frances E. Sabin*. Silver, Burdett. $1.92.

PROUDHON'S SOLUTION OF THE SOCIAL PROBLEM. By *P. J. Proudhon*. Vanguard. 50 cents.

THE SCIENCE OF SOCIAL RELATIONS. By *Hornell Hart*. Holt. $4.50.

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The Wits' Weekly

Conducted by EDWARD DAVISON

Competition No. 17. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best "Thoughts on Reading of the Death of Thomas Hardy," in not more than 400 words of prose. (Entries should reach the *Saturday Review* office, 25 West 45th Street, not later than the morning of February 13.)

Competition No. 18 A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best short lyric called "Going Down Hill in an Automobile." (Entries should reach the *Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of February 20).

Competitors are advised to read carefully the rules printed below.

THE FIFTEENTH COMPETITION

A PRIZE of fifteen dollars was offered for the best sonnet on Mayor Thompson of Chicago beginning—"Lincoln, thou shouldst be living at this hour!"

Won by Arthur Davison Ficke.

THE PRIZE SONNET

Lincoln, thou shouldst be living at this hour!
Not that thy somber eloquence would smite
In righteous wrath this impudent loud wight;
Not that thy deep eyes, thy dark brows would lour.
Down on his obscene antics; not that power
Of sudden passion from thy mountain height
Would leap in lightning-fury to affright
The little strutter, and his vogue devour:
But that on oafs like this—baser and dafter
Than even the ones well known to thee of old—
To whom thy twinkling eyes the truth then told
Of what small—peanuts they would seem thereafter—
There might like a calm avalanche be rolled
The slow tremendous humor of thy laughter.

ARTHUR DAVISON FICKE.

The great majority of our sonneteers took this competition very seriously indeed, so seriously that the joke was on me long before I had completed a first reading of the entries. There were nearly a hundred and fifty. Sonnets in bulk make notoriously stiff reading at any time, but when they all begin with the same line and approach the same subject, as these did, one's mind refused to work for more than half an hour at a sitting. Hence this belated report. All but a negligible few were full of critical meat. The Mayor was not spared. He was showered with all varieties of invective and abuse. But there was very little poetry in most of the sonnets. A. D. Arnold's rather strained diatribe may be quoted as typical.

. . . there he sits,
The crown of oll mephetical nitwits,
Fuming his "wisdom" with a mayor's power
To be heard and attended to. Oh, it's
A brave backwoodsman's job: it makes us cower!
"England would rule America!!!" Dost hear?
Rise from thy grave in Springfield, take thine ax
And hit this polecat swift ironic cracks;
Skin with sarcastic knife; and while we cheer.
Stretch his flayed hide upon that outhouse door
Whose name wo do not mention any more.

This is very padded. (I do not remember having seen "it's" rhymed before.) And the general level of the outstanding entries was not much higher, though nearly all included something as biting as Mr. Arnold's conclusion.

John M. Dobbs set the pace for more dignified though not less indignant competitors in a sonnet that tried to realize that America had produced both Lincoln and the Mayor of Chicago. Lucy Lombardi came to her theme straight from Mr. Sandburg's "The Prairie Years;" but her metaphors, in places, if not mixed were at least muddled.

All the clean prairies and the inland seas
Whose sweet winds lured men westward in thy youth
Has he polluted, drained them to the lees,
And turned their blinded peoples from the truth.

R. A. T. S. apostrophized Lincoln more effectively with his unequivocal

Wert standing in his shoes (and here's the truth)
Three million men would beg a second Booth.

Homer M. Parsons (like L. M. Swenson) plunged once again into the vernacular and spoke to Lincoln through the Mayor's own mouth. But his substance was thin.

You're just the guy that's after my own heart:
You threw away your hammer, got a horn
And licked the rebels. Sure as you are born
That's the same stuff I pull to lick the British.
You help; we'll twist the lion's tail apart.
But first let's have a drink, Abe: I feel skittish.

This is even a little cheap. Harold H. Scudder began better with

Lincoln, thou shouldst be living at this hour:
Of dirt we've more than our allotted peck,
The cards are stacked, they hold the entire deck,
And Thompson's both the joker and the bower.

But these and other more high-spirited effusions could not compare with the more serious and dignified entries by Elspeth, F. H. G., George Meason, Dorothea Shute, Charles F. Marks, and Margery Doud. Their dignity, however, was on the whole dull. In the end I had to choose between Arjeh and Arthur Davison Ficke. Arjeh's highly allusive, witty sonnet is, I think, a little too particularized though his reference to "Scarface Al" and the other Lincoln makes an appealingly imaginative point. But Mr. Ficke, in spite of the clumsy rhyme in its third line, really knows how to write a sonnet and, moreover, he alone rose to the height of the argument. Arjeh's entry is printed below.

Lincoln! Thou shouldst be living at this hour;
Not that we need thee in Chicago when
Our Lenience the Governor is Len;
Our Leading Pillar is the Tribune Tower;
When Coath and Heermann do their mercies shower
On library and school, and there are men
Like Smith for Senate, Leopold for Pen.
While William, like a Star, has built a part
In which he takes Ten-gallons off to be
Uncovered at the Name of Liberty;
Speeds in from Cicero, containing swart
And vesper-loving sons of Sicily,
A Lincoln, silent, alien—but free.

RULES

(Competitors failing to comply with rules will be disqualified.)

1. Envelopes should be addressed to "The Competitions Editor, *The Saturday Review of Literature*, 25 West 45th Street, New York City." The number of the competition (e.g., "Competition 1") must be written on the top left-hand corner. 2. All MSS. must be legible—typewritten if possible—and should bear the name or pseudonym of the author. Competitors may offer more than one entry. MSS. cannot be returned. 3. *The Saturday Review* reserves the right to print the whole or part of any entry.

The New Books

Music

(*Continued from preceding page*)

THE CHELSEA SONG BOOK. Minton, Balch. 1927. $6.

If you respond to the hearty gusto of English humor and the directness of English emotion you will want to come in contact with these songs, and, mindful of this country's forebears, you will be glad of the right to call them your own.

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If you would partake of the refreshment which comes from contact with humanity unalloyed by sophistication, and taste of the intrinsic English nationality springing from the people and from their countryside, you will spend hours, from time to time, in the company of their folk songs. You will find no opportunity more delightful than that offered by this charmingly printed and humorously illustrated collection, which contains traditional folk-song, some songs from early operettas, and one from Tom Durfey's "Pills to Purge Melancholy." And very effective pills they must have been if we judge from the specimen in this "Chelsea Song Book."

Poetry

ON WINGS OF SONG. By *Laura Rathbone*. Vinal.

PLAIN JUNE. By *A. P. Herbert*. Doubleday, Page. $2 net.

TWO HUNDRED BEST AND SECOND BEST POEMS. Chosen by *C. Lewis Hind*. Putnam. $2.

FIFTY POEMS BY AMERICAN POETS. Edited by *Joseph Dean*. New York: Dean. $1.50.

MATTHEW PRIOR: Occasional Verses. Oxford University Press. $2.25.

WILLIAM COLLINS: Ode Occasioned by the Death of Mr. Thomson. Oxford University Press. $1.75.

SAMUEL JOHNSON: The Vanity of Human Wishes. Oxford University Press.

THOMAS GRAY: Elegy Wrote in a Country Church Yard. Oxford University Press. $1.25.

VERSE FANCIES. By *Jean Mitchell Lawrence*. Vinal. $1.50.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY LYRICS. Edited by *Norman Ault*. Longmans, Green. $3.50.

THE BELLS OF ITALY AND OTHER POEMS. By *Grace Gorges*. Vinal. $1.50.

SEDGE FIRE. By *Ernest G. Moll*. Vinal. $1.50.

MYSTELLA. By *Brookes More*. Cornhill Publishing Co.

TO ALL YOU LADIES. By *M. J. Goell*. Vinal. $2.

Religion

CURRENT CHRISTIAN THINKING. By *Gerald B. Smith*. University of Chicago Press. $2.

THE SEE OF PETER. By *James T. Shotwell* and *Louise Ropes Loomis*. Columbia University Press. $10.

NEW TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES. By *Ernest D. Burton*. Edited by Harold R. Willoughby. University of Chicago Press. $2.

NEW SOLUTIONS OF NEW TESTAMENT PROBLEMS. By *Edgar J. Goodspeed*. University of Chicago Press. $2.

PRINCIPLES AND PRECEPTS. By *Hastings Rashdall*. Oxford University Press. $2.25.

REVELATION AND INSPIRATION. By *Benjamin Breckenridge Warfield*. Oxford University Press. $3.

SOME AUTHENTIC ACTS OF THE EARLY MARTYRS. By *E. C. E. Owen*. Oxford University Press. $2.

LATER GREEK RELIGION. By *Edwyn Bevan*. Dutton. $1.60.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY. By *Albert C. Diffenbach*. Morrow. $1.50 net.

JESUS. By *Henri Barbusse*. Macaulay. $2.50.

DEALING SQUARELY WITH GOD. By *Ralph S. Cushman*. Abingdon. 50 cents.

THE HEIGHTS OF CHRISTIAN UNITY. By *Doremus A. Hayes*. Abingdon. $1.75.

THE GOSPEL OF SADHU SUNDAR SINGH. By *Friedrich Heiler*. Oxford University Press. $3.

IN THE HILLS OF GALILEE. By *Louis Tucker*, Bobbs-Merrill.

THE INDESTRUCTIBLE FAITH. By *David G. Einstein*. Bloch. $2.50.

Travel

A VAGABOND IN FIJI. By HARRY L. FOSTER. Dodd, Mead. 1927. $3.

This is the sort of anecdotal travelogue which will interest only two kinds of people, those who have taken the same trip and those who have already booked a passage for a trip to Honolulu, Samoa, and Fiji with a side trip through the Tongas. The title of the book is misleading; only a little more than half of it deals with Fiji and much of that is padded with comment on Fiji in other days.

It is exceedingly casual and superficial journalese. The whole book has the charm of the perfectly expected. What everyone sees, everyone talks about, everyone learns in a day's stop at Honolulu, a day's stop in Pago Pago, and a slightly longer stay in Fiji, Mr. Foster took pains to see, to hear, to comment upon, to photograph in a few cases. A sense of recognition, of reliving the voyage is as inevitable and as non-significant as the thrill one would experience in China if someone recited "Manhattan Transfer, Change for Hudson Terminal and Downtown New York." And it must be admitted that no amount of annoyance with the obvious, unrewarding comment on the islands and their people, could quite dim our pleasure at finding a photograph of the jolly, obese Samoan policeman who carried our baskets on our first trip across Tutuila.

There are scattered, inadequate remarks on the history of the different islands, on their present population, on the state of the missions. And there are purple passages about the color of the reef which contrast grotesquely with the general tone of the book.

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[JUST PUBLISHED]

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THE American Art Association opened the new year with a miscellaneous sale on January 4, in which a fine lot of sporting books, vied with an assortment of Cruikshank items. Among these were various original drawings and, a much greater curiosity, several woodblocks on which George Cruikshank had drawn in pencil the outline of illustrations, ready for the cutter who never began this particular task. Another curious item was a volume containing issues of the New York *Mirror* for the years 1837 to 1839, with an inscription presenting it to Queen Victoria.

It is said that there are no more good old books left in English libraries. Instead, they are now turning up in unsuspected American hands. One such is the library of S. N. Levy, of which the first part was sold at the Anderson Galleries on January 10. There were good copies of a number of rare early plays, with nearly all the leading dramatists represented.

The Walpole Galleries held a sale on the 13th, for those who are bargain hunting, and know what they want.

The catalogue of the Kipling sale at the Anderson Galleries on the 16th is an invaluable supplement to the standard bibliographies. It describes several items that had escaped previous record, while a number of known pieces appear here for the first time in public. The collection is especially rich in items having a personal association, affording literary students by far the best opportunity yet offered to get an insight into Kipling's habits of work.

The spirit of George D. Smith must have brooded over the sales room of the Anderson Galleries on January 17 and 18, when the library of the late John C. Tomlinson went under the hammer, for it was a perfect example of the collections made under the inspiration of "G.D.S." in his palmiest days. A somewhat similar lot was disposed of on the 19th, made up of the Napoleonic collection of Dr. John Neilson, Jr., the library of the late Dr. Louis D. Mason, and books on Chinese Porcelains from an English client.

It is very hard luck for Miss Evelyn May Albright of Chicago, that her "Dramatic Publication in England, 1580-1640" is brought out by the Modern Language Society of America just at the moment when contrast is inevitable with Mr. McKerrow's "Introduction to Bibliography." Although it would not be guessed from the titles, her "Study of Conditions Affecting Content and Form of Drama" is an examination of the material with which the older student is most familiar, and from much the same point of view. The appreciative way in which he recognizes the value of her work means more than any one else's opinion. For those who want to go on from McKerrow to a more detailed consideration of bibliographical problems, there is nothing better than Miss Albright's monograph.

The Union Square Book Shop in New York understands the intriguing art of starting its catalogue with items which lead the reader to wonder what other curiosities may lie beyond. "Never Regret" is the warning in its heading, above an offer of the document authorizing Commodore Vanderbilt to run a ferry, the patent of the first ice cutting machine, a paper signed by John Milton's brother, and an autograph letter from the father of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes of the United States Supreme Court, saying that "every library has its shady corner where modesty of a certain kind shuns the glare of daylight." There is also "Prince Albert's Cigarette Case. A Souvenir of the House of Battenberg," of which twenty-five copies are said (apparently) to have been printed at St. John, Newfoundland, in 1906. If the description may be trusted, this should indeed make even collectors of tobacco material, as the cataloguer says, "Profusely ill."

The Colonial Society of Massachusetts has made a distinguished record, a part of

(*Continued on next page*)

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*.

F. J. B., Montreal, Canada, has come upon, in the preface of a book dated 1834, a reference to "the romance of Rodrigo," and has not been able to locate this character in any poetry with which he is familiar.

THIS can be no other than Roderigue Diaz de Bivar, surnamed "The Cid," born at Burgos, 1030, died in 1099, the hero of heroes in Spain—unless one puts before him Our Lord Don Quixote, who according to Unamuno is at this day crying aloud in the wilderness, and will cry until the wilderness hears and is transformed into a resounding forest.

The Spanish chronicle of the Cid belongs to the thirteenth century and was first printed in 1544; the Spanish poem dates from 1207; in 1615 there were 102 Spanish ballads of the Cid in existence. Southey made an English version of the chronicle in 1808; Lockhart translated into English verse eight of the ballads, and in 1845 George Dennis made a connected tale of it all, in prose and verse. It may be added that it was for his "Le Cid" in 1636 that Corneille was first called "le grand."

But it was not from any of these that I recognized the gentleman, in spite of the fact that the only Rodrigo appearing in the dictionaries of literary characters is the second villain in "Othello." No, I made the acquaintance of Ruy Diaz de Bivar and his Ximena through "Zig-zag Journeys in Spain," one of a series of travel books popular in my youth, and more than popular with me. In these a club of boys took journeys every vacation (one book came out every Christmas in time for your stocking) under the charge of a teacher who improved all the occasions up to the historical hilt. It sounds stodgy when you tell it, but the books were really so good that I wish someone would make new ones along the same lines. This is not altogether my own idea: I have heard several other devotees of the series suggest it: they could not be reprinted, being by now outdated.

The mother of S. T. B., Ballard Vale, Mass., rests her eyes by having ask-me-another questions read to her, and has exhausted those published by the Viking Press and "Ask me a Bible Question" published by the Century. He is looking for general information tests for her use.

I LIKE "Answer This One," by F. P. A. and Harry Hansen (Clode); it was certainly produced under distinguished auspices. "I Ought to Know That," by Berton Braley and G. B. Hill (Appleton) is a good memory-test: I trailed along with it for some time in the newspapers. "What's Your Average?" by A. H. Macrae and others (Dutton), is another of this sort, and Carolyn Wells has one, "Ask Me a Question" (Winston).

I HATE to think of the vocal commotion that must have been produced when all the readers of this department tried to pronounce Miguel as the types made S. T. B. pronounce it, in a recent number of this review. By shifting a hyphen you will please claw it back to Mi-ghel. Oh the little more and how much it is!

M. S., *New York*, says that George Herbert Palmer's "Life of Alice Freeman Palmer" should have been added to the books about happy marriages, as it is a favorite gift to newly-weds. "This comparatively small volume is not merely a biography of that rare spirit who was once the president of Wellesley College, but is also the beautiful chronicle of an unusually happy marriage. The author was, of course, for many years professor of philosophy at Harvard and himself no unimportant personage."

E. F. H., Cincinnati, O., asks for books on domestic architecture, and is especially interested in the story-and-a-half bungalow: he is also looking for a modern book on interior decoration, presumably for this house.

THERE is the popular "The Bungalow Book" by C. E. White (Macmillan); "Bungalows, Their Design, Construction and Furnishing," by H. H. Saylor (McBride), now in its fourth revised edition; Comstock's "Bungalows, Camps, and Mountain Houses" (Comstock, Ithaca, N. Y.), and "The Book of Bungalows," by R. R. Phillips (Scribner), all of which are practical and none expensive. But no one in the case of E. F. H. contents himself with one aspect of the subject only. He may as well be told at once that he may draw upon the ideas in Gray's "House and Home" (Lippincott), Allen's "The Smaller House of To-Day" (Scribner), "Your House," by J. R. McMahon (Minton, Balch), "Homes of Character," by Mead and Higgins (Dodd, Mead), and "The Smaller American House," by E. B. Power (Little, Brown), without spending more than three dollars for each or dealing with publications of any but recent date. Nor is his collection likely to stop there: I have been for some time providing new titles for the prospective builder of a small house in a suburb of this city, for which the lot is paid for; the owners are handicapped in their collection of funds for building purposes because they have bought so many books of plans and pictures. For example, books like "Small French Buildings," a collection of full-page photographs of farms, manor-houses, and small châteaux so clear in detail as to be most alluring. I have suggested it more than once to home-planners, for the plans are with the pictures. Also there is a new one, "Small Manor Houses and Farmsteads in France," by Eberlein and Ramsdell (Lippincott), and another, "Cottages, Manoirs, and Other Minor Buildings of Normandy and Brittany," by W. D. Foster (Architectural Book Co.), neither of which is cheap, but look at the plates. It was partly the Scribner book that made me choose farming country in northern France for a walking tour, but it was only a natural taste for getting off the road that landed me in one farmyard there, close enough to find out what made the sides look as if they had been shingled in dark blue. It was, I discovered, the oval metal plates set upon stalls of stock winning prizes in local fairs, corresponding to blue ribbons; this being the home of Percherons, this farm had been gathering so many trophies until I thought them part of the original architectural scheme.

This, however, has nothing to do with the case; let us return to the road with the news that "Smaller Houses and Gardens of Versailles," is another beautiful picture-and-plan book (Pencil Points Press, N. Y.), and that for six dollars you may get Lawrence Weaver's "Cottages: Their Planning, Design, and Materials" (Scribner). There is no end to the beautiful books about English domestic architecture, especially cottages, and a good beginning may be made with "Old English Houses," by J. A. Gotch (Dutton), which is really a history of the effect of changing social customs and ideals of comfort upon the construction of the homes of England. "English Architecture in a Country Village," by A. H. Plaisted (Longmans, Green), is a little new book that will be useful here.

The pictures in "Old Houses of New England," by Knowlton Mixer (Macmillan), though not large are so beautiful and so many that I cannot leave them out of this collection. Here are buildings of all types to be found in this part of the world; the distinctive architecture of the Cape, the fine dwellings of Bennington and Exeter, Salem mansions and Connecticut places, and the homes on Nantucket. The architecture is built into the history, and anyone with New England blood will enjoy the book. There are hints for the modern builder in Sarah Comstock's "Roads to the Revolution," too (Macmillan); this is a careful retracing and documenting of the places familiar to history, with anecdotes and hints as to tours through these regions. The pictures are clear and there are many of them.

And now that we are on the subject, why conceal from the world that there are several new and pleasantly written accounts of the development of architecture, intended for the general reader? "The A. B. C. of Architecture," by Matlock Price (Dutton), goes further indeed, and is evidently intended not only to inform an outsider concerning the work of an architect, but to make it possible for him to get something of a start for himself at home. The drawings in this book are most interesting. "The Story of the Art of Building," by P. L. Waterhouse (Appleton), is a brief and informing survey, and a sketch of what we have done here is given in T. E. Tallmadge's "Story of Architecture in America" (Norton).

Compleat Collector

(*Continued from preceding page*)

which is due to the fact that it has recognized the value of bibliographical research in solving historical problems. Limiting itself strictly within the geographical and chronological boundaries of its field, this society has done more to elucidate the history of American printing than any other organization. The twenty-sixth volume of its Publications, just issued, adds to this preëminence. The most valuable contribution is a letter, edited with explanatory notes by Professor Chester N. Greenough, written from London in 1702, which reveals the details of the business arrangements which preceded the publication of Cotton Mather's "Magnalia." Significant on account of the outstanding position of this work in colonial literature, this letter has an even greater value as one of the few documents which reveal the relations between booksellers, printers, and authors at that period. It also proves that the literary agent is not a modern innovation.

Almost equally important is a detailed explanation, by Mr. William C. Lane, of why the Harvard senior class changed printers in 1771. It is an effective demonstration of the necessity of going behind the mere imprint of any publication, and of trying to find out why certain works were printed and sold by the persons whose names appear. One minor fact that comes out of Mr. Lane's documents is that it took 3,000 copies of the Commencement Day program to supply the ordinary demand. There could hardly be a more convincing proof of the place which this college festival occupied in the life of the community, in the period just before the outbreak of war with the Mother Country.

The elder sister society, the Massachusetts Historical Society, has likewise printed bibliographical contributions more or less frequently in recent years. Its latest volume of Proceedings contains a list of 437 French Royal Edicts which concern America, dated from 1629 to 1789, compiled by Worthington C. Ford from material in the Paris archives, the Public Record Office at London, and a single American collection, the New York Public Library. The same volume prints a number of autograph letters of general literary interest, for which those interested in such things might not think of looking in a local historical society's record of meetings. These are from Robert Browning, Thomas Carlyle, James Fenimore Cooper, William Cowper, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walter Scott, and Alfred Tennyson. There is also a letter from William Blackstone of the Commentaries.

❧ ❧

Familiarity with very rare modern books leads to some curious aberrations, and one of these led the house of Dutton to an undue modesty in the format of their booklet relating the story of their seventy-five years as a bookselling firm. The likeliest explanation is that they realized that the greatest rarities are the least pretentious in appearance, and they had a natural desire to have their book become scarce. But it was not quite fair to their friends, for this little pamphlet well deserves a finer dress, worthy of the concrete evidence it affords of "The Joys and Sorrows of Selling Books from 1852 to 1927, Compiled from a Variety of Original Sources and Lavishly Illustrated with Prints and Engravings." Incidentally, there are a number of new and good anecdotes illustrating the humors of bookselling, which may be expected to crop up from now on, as "fillers" in the columns of bookish periodicals.

❧ ❧

A significant episode in the cultural history of America concerns two well-to-do Boston gentlemen, who gave up other occupations in order to learn all they could about Spain. One of them studied its history and wrote literature; the other studied literature and wrote history, a history that long held its place as best work on the subject. Both gathered libraries which place them in the front rank of American collectors; one gave his books to the Public Library and the other to Harvard, and the Ticknor and Prescott collections are still important factors in maintaining the prestige of the Boston and Harvard libraries.

It is not easy to understand how George Ticknor and William Hickling Prescott, the latter all but blind, living in the Boston of ninety years ago, managed to acquire a sufficiency of correct information to secure a place among the world's recognized scholars. This has been made easier by the publication, from the precious accumulations in the library of the Hispanic Society of America, of the letters written by these two Bostonians to their friend, Pascual de Gayangos, who was one of the foremost Spanish intellectuals of their day.

Gayangos was, first of all, a well-informed bibliophile, and it is evident from these letters that he must have enjoyed thoroughly the occupation which their friendship gave him, of buying books for them. Ticknor sent him the catalogue of his library, already large, and drafts on Paris of 500 francs at a time, which was then enough to cover, in advance, the outlay for a box full of sixteenth and seventeenth century literary treasures. Anyone who has looked over the Ticknor shelves at the Boston library, or studied the printed catalogue, will bear witness to the sound judgment and discriminating knowledge of books which the Spanish scholar showed in carrying out his commission. The letters which have now been made public by the Hispanic Society of New York add many details which are of importance, not only for a better knowledge of the individuals, but even more for the light they throw upon the cultural conditions in this country at that period.

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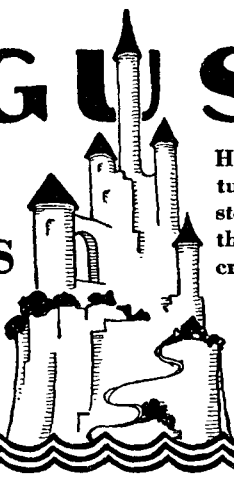

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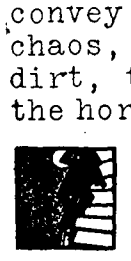
We have just had an anonymous note from one who signs himself Mark VII: "It was a great adventure. Even though what I have written may be termed 'indiscreet truth;' it will be devoured eagerly, as scraps of candour always are. **THE SUBALTERN ON THE SOMME** will convey to you the chaos, the din, the dirt, the humor and the horror of war." $2



Indispensable today for every automobile with traffic conditions as they are, is a volume of short stories. We recommend **MR. FORTUNE, PLEASE,** by H. C. Bailey. A baffling collection of mysterious tales - guaranteed not to bore you during the long intermissions on Fifth Ave. $2.00.

The Renaissance--that wicked rebirth of education - is the background for these stories, the **FACETIAE OF POGGIO** - translated by Edward Storer. They are tales of a witty, risque nature. "The Breeches of St. Francis" tells how a monk..but read it. $3

THE PHOENIX NEST

TWO books important for you to read are *Marcel Proust's* two volumes of "Cities of the Plain" (A. & C. Boni), translated by *C. K. Scott-Moncrieff* (limited edition) and *Lion Feuchtwanger's* "The Ugly Duchess" (Viking Press). We have as yet read neither, but have recently heard more talk about them than concerning any recent volumes. . . .

When we saw the title, "The Earth Upsets," we thought at first that it was a new volume of poems by *Clement Wood*, following his "Glad of Earth" and "The Earth Turns South." Instead it is a volume by *Chase Salmon Osborn*, published by the Waverly Press of Baltimore and dealing with the various motions of the earth, not to mention seismic disturbances. When, from a rapid survey of the text, you begin to realize just how unstable this old solid *terra firma* really is—why, you'll immediately forget all about it again, as we all do, and go on about your business, as we all continue to do, just as though the earth were quite flat and there were no solar system at all. . . .

Louis Untermeyer's present quarters in London on Eaton Square are, he says, "two chapters away from *George Moore's* Ebury Street and round the corner from *Noel Coward.*" . . .

Katharine Lee Bates writes us kindly with reference to our hint of illness in the family. She informs us that she, regrettably, suffered from an attack of tonsilitis a year ago, and, upon emerging from it, found herself writing the following, which, she says, "entertained the doctor as a 'clinical record:'"

ASPIRIN AVENUE
(A Record of Tonsilitis)

Through Aspirin Avenue, hung with tapestries, marching all night long,
Solemn splendor of crimson tapestries, swaying tapestries,
Velvet tapestries waved by bells that peal a funeral song!
(My friend will be buried tomorrow.)
Crimson tapestries, heavy and rich, veiling the fronted walls
Of arrogant streets! Are we in Spain as the Corpus Christi falls
On gray Toledo, Ghost of cities? Bells pealing all night long!
(Chiming with my sorrow.)
Through Aspirin Avenue, pylons and pyramids, driven all night long!
Hoary temples and shafts and pyramids, moonlight pyramids,
Captive chain-fast collar to collar, marshalled by drum and gong!
("Ice-bag might relieve her.")
Oh, but our collars, our iron collars, hot are our collars and tight!
Luckless prisoners of the battle, driven by whips all night,
Stumbling on to the crack of whips and the clangors of drum and gong!
("Runs up quite a fever.")

In regard to literature of the West, do you know *Edward Eberstadt's* Historical Publications? The Eberstadt address is 55 West 42nd Street. The fifth publication, now ready for immediate delivery (the regular edition priced at $12.50) is "The Journals and Letters of *Major John Owen*, Pioneer of the Northwest, 1850-1871." This is transcribed and edited from the original manuscripts in the Montana Historical Society and the Collection of *W. R. Coe, Esq.*, prepared by *Seymour Dunbar* and with notes to Owen's texts by *Paul C. Phillips*, Professor of History in the University of Montana. The work is in two volumes and contains two maps and thirty plates. . . .

We sorrow for the death of *G. F. Scotson-Clark*, once art editor of the *Century Magazine* and the writer of most delectable works on gastronomy. As lately as December 12th of the year just vanished we received a very pleasant letter from him urging us to stop in at his Red Brick Inn at Westport, Connecticut, if we were ever out that way.

Brillat-Savarin is dead (alack), [he wrote] but *Scotson-Clark* is alive and on the job. I opened last Saturday. Huge success. I am now booking tables for Christmas-tide and New Year's with the identical Christmas pudding served to *Mayor Thompson's bête noir.*

Well, so uncertain is life. . . .

Little, Brown and Company, as maybe you don't know, are staging two prize competitions. The first is a $4,000 competition conducted jointly with *Boys' Life* for a new story for boys based on the principles of the Boy Scout Law and Oath. The competition ends July 1st, 1928. The second is a $2,500 competition for the best book on American history, the judges being *James Truslow Adams, Worthington C. Ford*, and *Allan Nevins*. This competition closes October 1st, 1928. For particulars concerning both competitions, write to Little, Brown and Company. . . .

The story of *Baron Richthofen*, the great German ace, which has appeared serially in *Liberty*, told by *Floyd Gibbons*, is now published in book form under the same title, "The Red Knight of Germany," by Doubleday, Doran. . . .

Have we said that we found an advance copy of *Isadora Duncan's* autobiography as fascinating and enthralling a volume as we have read for some time? Boni & Liveright is bringing it out. It is *not*, according to our lights, that the book is, as they say, "written with great literary distinction," but that it is the full expression of a personality undoubtedly one of the most extraordinary of our time. It is full of spirit and color and unquenchable fire. . .

Dr. James W. Walker of Chicago, referring to *Allan Westcott's* letter in the *Nest* of December 24th, sends us a copy of the following letter in his own possession. It is dated June 15th, 1912, from Bateman's, Burwash, Sussex. It reads

James W. Walker, Esq.,
Dear Sir:

In reply to your letter of May 29th, Mr. Rudyard Kipling desires me to tell you that the Red Gods are the gods of the chase.

The Seven Seas are the N. and S. Atlantic, N. and S. Pacific, Mediterranean, Indian Ocean, and Channel Seas.

Yours truly,
M. Quarrier-Hogg, Secretary.

. . . Thanking you kindly,
THE PHŒNICIAN.

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Points of View

Boss Tweed

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:

SIR:

I have just finished reading in your issue of January 7 a review of "Boss Tweed." In his review Mr. Royal J. Davis said:

"He gives a reader the impression, for instance, that at critical moments the New York newspapers were lukewarm in their opposition to Tweed. When the Boss returned from Albany in the spring of 1870 after the Legislature had passed his outrageous charter for the city he ruled, 'nearly all the papers,' according to Mr. Lynch, 'praised him.' What can Mr. Lynch mean? *The Tribune*, *The Sun*, *The World*, and *The Evening Post* had fought the charter bitterly—a fact which Mr. Lynch fails to mention. The only quotation he gives in connection with his extraordinary statement is to the effect that a portrait of Tweed 'was yesterday hung' in the City Hall and 'was said to cost $2,500.' This hardly sounds like praise.

"Another example of Mr. Lynch's failure to tell the whole truth appears in the pages detailing the publication in the *Times* of the damning records taken from the city's books and showing the financial operations of the Ring. 'After nearly two weeks of daily publication of the proofs of these monstrous frauds, with names, dates, and amounts,' writes Mr. Lynch, 'the apathy of the press is best illustrated by the zeal, one moment hot, the next cold, of Greeley.' Mr. Lynch makes no exception.

"'The press,' he says, sweepingly. The 'apathy' of one newspaper is 'best illustrated' by the fact that on the afternoon of the day on which the very first instalment of the article appeared in the *Times* an editorial appeared in the *Evening Post* accepting the figures in the *Times* as authentic and that this editorial was followed almost daily by others."

Your reviewer quoted the line "Nearly all the papers praised him" from page 333 of "Boss Tweed." Had he turned to the next page he would have read:

"Immediately after the signing of the charter, the newspapers now seemed to vie with one another in seeing which could be most extravagant in its praise of The Boss. Some of the Republican journals exceeded their Young Democratic contemporaries. When Tweed, to get rid of two of the leaders of the Young Democracy, abolished the Board of Supervisors, the *Times* said editorially:

"'Senator Tweed is in a fair way to distinguish himself as a reformer. Having gone so far as the champion of the new Election bill and charter, he seems to have no idea of turning back. Perhaps, like Macbeth, he thinks that under existing circumstances "returning were as tedious as go o'er," but at all events he has put the people of Manhattan Island under great obligations. His last proposition to abolish the Board of Supervisors of New York and transfer their functions to the Mayor, Recorder, and new Board of Aldermen is the crowning act of all.

"'It strikes a blow at one of the most corrupt Departments of a government, and one which is as useless as a fifth wheel to a coach. We trust that Senator Tweed will manifest the same energy in the advocacy of this last reform which marked his action in regard to the city charter.'"

On page 337 is to be found:

"The newspaper told of Tweed's defeat of Tilden and the Young Democracy by a vote of 242 to 23—more than ten to one! Said *The Tribune* in its head: 'Triumph of Tweed. The Young Democracy Squelched.' The *Times* thus exulted: 'Now is the triumph of Tweed complete.'"

And on page 353 occurs:

"Tweed could turn to *The Sun* for consolation. The week of Watson's end, one of Dana's editorial writers made a counter-attack on Jennings. 'The decline of the New York *Times* in everything that entitles a paper to respect and confidence has been rapid and complete. Its present editor, who was dismissed from the London *Times* for improper conduct and untruthful writing, has sunk into a tedious monotony of slander, disregard of truth, and blackguard vituperation. Poor Mr. Jones and other proprietors should understand that while the public admires a fearless, independent, truthful, and candid journal, such as *The Sun* is, they are bored and repelled by ill-nature and tiresome repetition of venomous slander.'

"This would wake up Jones! This is what the respectable *Sun* thought of the attacks on Tweed. Slander! Disregard of truth! Blackguard vituperation. And the remedy? *The Sun* had it: 'Let the Times change its course, send off Jennings, and get some gentleman and scholar in his place, and become again an able and high-toned newspaper. Thus it may escape from ruin. Otherwise it is doomed.'"

On page 355 appears:

"Jones's most stalwart ally, Charles Nordhoff, lost his job as managing editor of *The Evening Post* for his attacks on Tweed. . . . William Cullen Bryant was owner and publisher of the paper. . . . Attempts have been made to shoulder on Isaac Henderson (business manager of the paper) all the odium involved in the disgraceful treatment of Nordhoff. Henderson had an unsavory reputation, known to Bryant, as far back as 1865. . . ."

And on the following page is:

"With the honest Nordhoff out of the way," *The Evening Post* rushed to the defense of Tweed, Sweeny, Hall, and Connolly, ingeniously explaining that Connolly could not show the books of the finance department because the Aldermen alone possessed that power, and implied that the *Times* and *Harper's Weekly* were actuated by dishonest motives in their attacks on Tweed."

And in his too-zealous defense of the venal *Post* of Bryant's day your reviewer implied that I had suppressed the story of the forced reform of that paper. On page 366 of "Boss Tweed" I wrote:

"Greeley's conscience was being aroused. *The Post* was also feebly reechoing the hue and cry raised by Jennings and Jones. Bryant's journal had left the ranks of the unrepentant Magdalens of the press a few days before the *Times* began publishing the proofs of corruption. . . ."

Also on the same page, "On July 29, the *Times* exhausted the damning documents provided by O'Brien and O'Rourke. . . . The day before the last of these articles appeared the infamy of the controlled newspapers was typified by an editorial in the *World* accusing the *Times* of a 'reckless attempt to shake and undermine the city credit, block the wheels of municipal machinery, and introduce a reign of anarchy.'"

To quote the *Times* (see page 327 of "Boss Tweed")—"They denounced when it was no longer dangerous to denounce. Their indignation concerning The Ring was most edifying—after The Ring was down." True, some of the newspapers fought Tweed's corrupt charter. But that was only a gesture for the record, made with Tweed's consent. For they did not want to lose their share of the loot that came in the shape of extortionate prices for public advertising and in other ways. They reformed only when they saw Jones at the head of an outraged public approaching with a basket of scarlet letters.

DENIS TILDEN LYNCH.

New York.

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Beecher Again

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:

SIR:

Will you of your courtesy grant me space for a brief reply to Mr. Hibben's assertion in your issue of December 10 that I gave him material aid in his so-called biography of Henry Ward Beecher?

Mr. Hibben, grandson of a family friend whose letters express the warmest devotion to Mr. Beecher, called on me at my home and wrote me several letters, seeking information bearing on the book he was writing. At no time did he intimate that his opinion of my grandfather, ever honored and beloved in his family, differed so radically from his family's position. Yet I gave him no access to original material. On the contrary, I refused him the use of the large collection of Beecher papers in my hands. He expresses gratitude to me "for permission to examine Mr. Beecher's diary kept during his Cincinnati days as well as the original of the agreement between Mr. Beecher and the Greek lad, Constantine Fondolaik, and a number of Mr. Beecher's early manuscript sermons." As to the diary, I showed him a single page that he might identify for me a name, but that page was published long ago as was the schoolboy compact with Constantine. His misleading method could hardly have a sharper illustration than in his "access" to the early manuscript sermons. There are five hundred of these in my library. I raised the lid of the box and showed him how they were stacked in packets duly dated, but not one sermon was untied, not a single sermon nor portion of a sermon read. His passing glance would hardly be recognized by scholars as a use of sources.

Such details of information as I gave in answer to questions he either disregarded, perverted, or rejected. For instance, he asked me about a book, "The Law of the House," which he believed written by Mrs. Beecher. I dissented and pointed out that, in any event, it was merely a bit of fiction, but having "discovered" the book in the Boston Public Library, he quoted it as autobiography. That Boston book was published thirteen years after my grandmother's death and discourses of the management of a household whose servants include a chauffeur, whereas it is probable that Mrs. Beecher never saw an automobile. The matter is important only as indicating Mr. Hibben's utter inaccuracy and unreliability.

Allow me to repeat that he had from our family no original material whatsoever for the libel he has put upon the market.

ANNIE BEECHER SCOVILLE.

Stamford, Conn.

A Suggestion

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:

SIR:

At this moment when all the world has lost a literary genius I am wondering whether your columns will be open to a suggestion which may, or may not, prove to be a futile one?

It is true that much to the regret of his warm admirers Mr. Hardy never received the Nobel Prize. Although receiving the prize would not have added still more of honor to the author's name it would have given many of us the pleasant feeling that our times had valiantly recognized all that Mr. Hardy was.

Now that we have come to the days when memorials will be planned for, can we not begin to plan at once for at least one of the memorials? In the course of time there will be various forms of memorials and it is to be hoped that some of these may have an active influence for good even in the distant future.

For long years Mr. Hardy was our President of The Incorporated Society of Authors, Playwrights, and Composers. In New York The Authors' League of America is a similar organization. Our league is raising a Fund the proceeds of which will be used for the benefit of temporarily or permanently needy authors. Would it not be fitting if our American admirers of Mr. Hardy could find some way of raising a definite sum of money for that Fund in Mr. Hardy's memory? It would be almost as if his own kindly author's hand were reaching far into the future in order to give its fraternal help and encouragement to some less fortunate authors of another day.

M. E. DEWITT.

Spreading the Gospel

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:

SIR:

Mr. Wilson Follett, writing in a recent number of *The Saturday Review*, refers at length to Stanley Unwin's "The Truth about Publishing" and mentions the fact that he has "talked with three publishers of good standing who, six months after its publication in America, had never heard of it."

The book was not only recommended to American publishers but called to their attention in a rather unusual way. We distributed 13,000 circulars about the book among thirty-seven leading American publishers and suggested to them that the circulars might be enclosed in letters acknowledging the receipt of manuscripts. It was our thought that the publishers would in this way be able to disseminate useful information about the ethics and practice of the publishing profession to authors with whom they had contact.

If the "three publishers" with whom Mr. Follett talked will write us, we shall take pleasure in sending them complimentary copies of the book.

DALE WARREN.

Houghton Mifflin Company,

Boston, Mass.

SHOP TALK

Out west in Chicago, where they can take their history or let it alone, ***A. Kroch*** has optimistically, in the face of what may some day develop (heaven forbid) into a book censorship, moved to larger and more beautiful quarters at 206 North Michigan Boulevard. For some time we have been awaiting an opportunity to tell how Chicago was so fortunate as to get ***Kroch's International Bookstore.*** Diplomats and law makers have worked hard to bring less than a good bookstore home to their respective communities but Chicago "lucked" this one.

As a young man, ***Kroch,*** living in Europe, had a great fondness for books. His dad had him all set for a professional career when he kicked over the traces and took a boat for America, land of opportunity.

The only friend to whom he might turn lived in Chicago, and he wanted one friend anyway in this new, strange country. Upon arriving at his destination he found to his dismay that the one person who might help him lived in New York, a city through which he had passed. Rather than return (we understand that he did not consider walking a pleasure and had run out of surplus funds) he took a job in a factory—window shades or something—until he had saved enough to start a small bookshop. From then on, the ***International Bookstore*** grew and grew and finally went to Michigan Boulevard, where it has been ever since.

The new store is quite spacious. A lot roomier than the old one, and is a fine looking establishment. We saw it before the opening, which we were unable to attend although we wanted to because afternoon tea was served (an old English custom), and there were great possibilities of a raid by the prohibition enforcement officers. Inasmuch as there was no excitement it is presumed that Chicago hasn't duplicated the Boston tea party as yet.

Some recent statements about the lack of bookstores ought to be refuted. Chicago, for instance, not only has this new and complete store, but boasts of a ***Brentano*** branch and a ***Doubleday Doran*** bookshop as well as about twenty-five other members of the ***American Booksellers Association.*** At these stores one may purchase anything from ancient philosophy to the most modern and frothy bit of fiction. And, as booksellers are choosing easy-to-get-to locations, there is no reason why the people of any Chicago community should be out of contact with bookstores —or ***The Saturday Review of Literature.***

Ellis W. Meyers
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

American Booksellers Association

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